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KEEUKA
AND OTHER POEMS.

BY
COATES-KINNEY.



PRIVATE EDITION.
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.
1855.

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TO

CHARLES SHERMAN ABBOTT,

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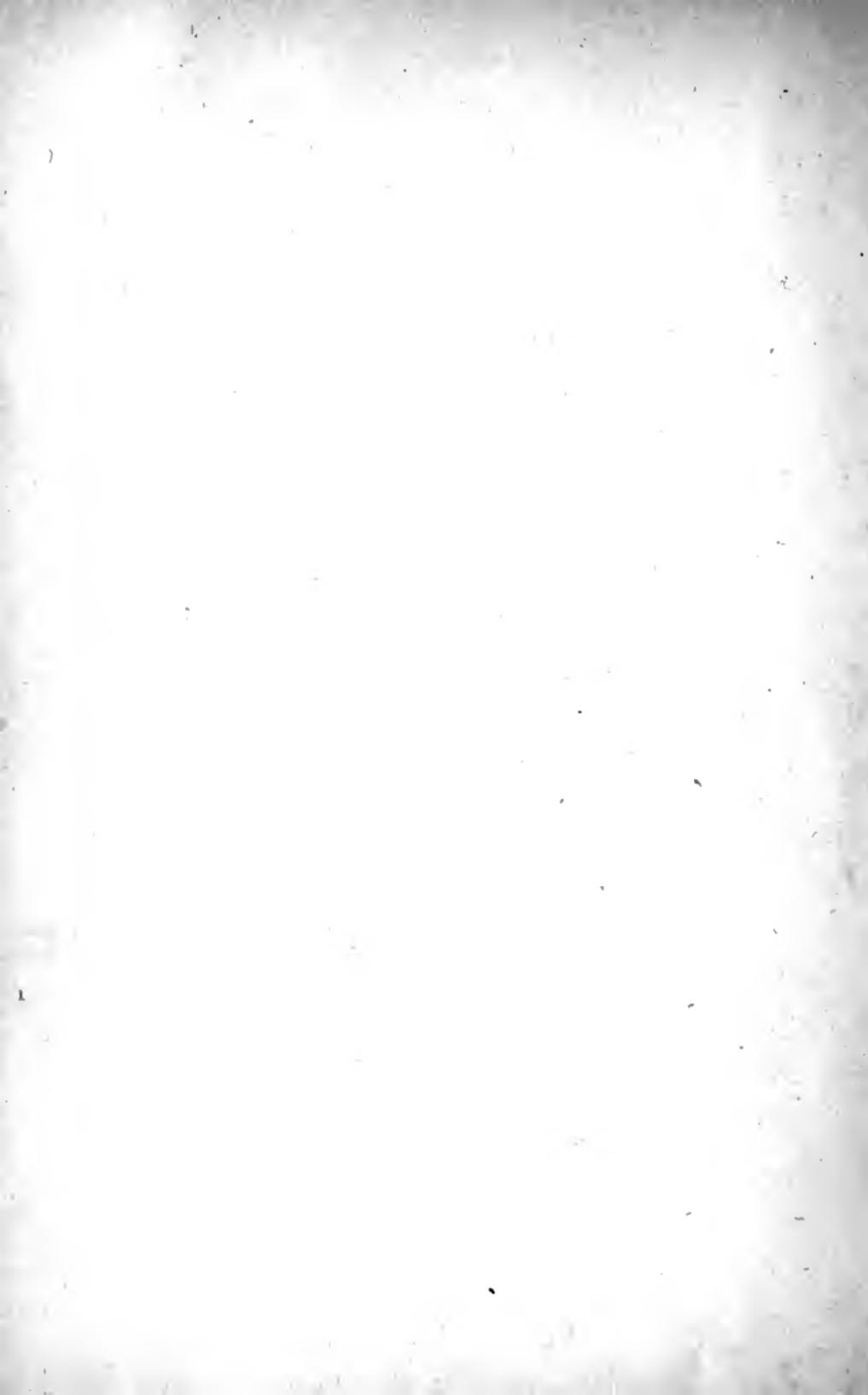
MY BEST FRIEND,

AS A HUMBLE TRIBUTE TO UNOSTENTATIOUS TALENT, GENEROUS SENTIMENT,
AND INSTINCTIVE INTEGRITY,

This Book

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

THE AUTHOR.



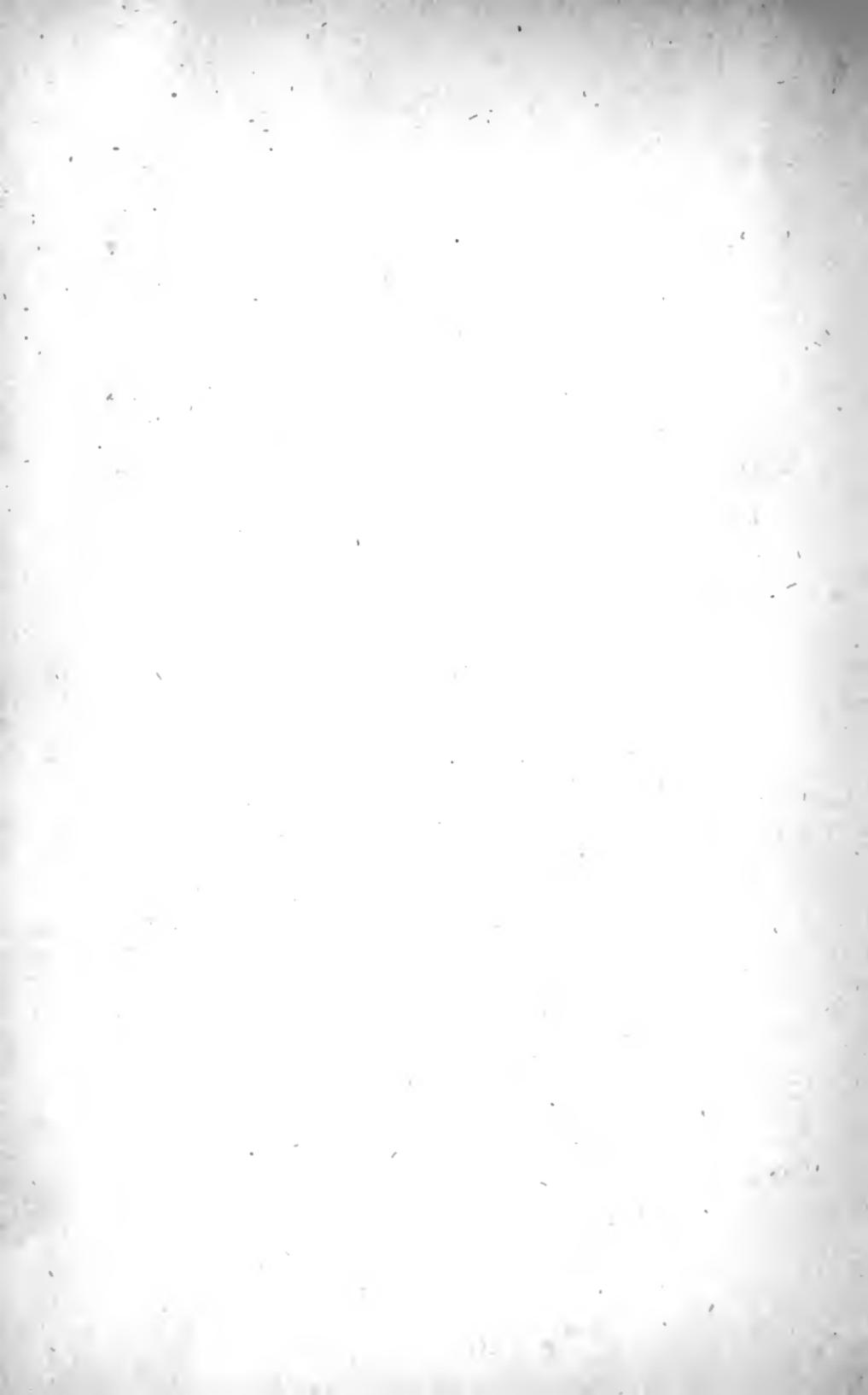
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KEEUKA: AN AMERICAN LEGEND.



K E E U K A :

A N A M E R I C A N L E G E N D.

CANTO I.

I.

WERE mine the language Sappho wont to sing,
Whose tones were brooks of honey in the soul ;
Could I the full Hellenic thunders fling
Down from sublime thought's empyrean pole,
With Argive auditors to hear them roll,
Then mote I not in vain invoke the Muse,
Whose mythic spells of inspiration stole
Upon old bards, and filled their hearts, as dews
Mysterious fill the buds, with glory's folded hues.

II.

But most the power I lack ; for Saxon speech,
Though rough as ragged ocean, yet is grand
As the great sound of billows on the beach,
That winds in wrath scourge bellowing to land.
Yet, though the Muse ne beck me with her hand
Up where Parnassian rills of passion flow,
Where fancy's rainbows brilliantly are spanned
Above thought's purest, most ethereal snow,
Nathless I meekly sing this museless lay below.

III.

Now welcome, Lake Keeuka ! hail to thee,
Thou hill-hugged bosom of blue waters, hail !
Dark clouds of sorrow have flocked over me,
And snowed upon this young hair, since my sail,
Coquetting with the sighful summer gale,
Wont to dance daintily thy waves along ;
Yet ne'er thy scenes, recalled in fancy, fail
With pleasant memories my soul to throng ;
And haply such may grace this legendary song.

IV.

Thou crystal chamber of the rambling brooks!—
Where, after play, they prattle home to sleep—
How oft I long for thy delightsome nooks,
Whereround the bosky banks rise high and steep,
And calm inclosed the basined waters keep!
There my canoe would float in summer time,
And I dream dreams that in my bosom deep
Are germs of thought now in an other clime;
And sometime one of these thus blossomed into rhyme:

1.

Twin of the summer sky
Azurn above,
Soft as a maiden's eye
Swimming in love,
Is the Keeuka.

2.

Into its bosom blue
Early birds fly,
Oft as they wake anew,
Taking for sky
Crystal Keeuka.

3.

Morning's red pinions fly
Over its breast,
And the night's bashful eye
Looks from the west
Into Keeuka.

4.

Clumps of the olden woods
Yet o'er its brink
Stoop down their leafy hoods
As if to think,
By the Keeuka,

5.

Of the brave werowance
Wont to roam here,
Or the squaw maiden's glance
Into the clear
Breast of Keeuka.

6 .

Then, when the moonlight shone
Down on the blue,
Here and there glode a lone
Indian canoe
O'er the Keeuka.

7 .

Here sat the savage maid
In the dark cove,
Where the low ripples played,
Watching her love
On the Keeuka.

8 .

Then all was forest here,
And, like the moose,
Tameless and free of fear,
Played the pappoose
Round the Keeuka.

9.

But the red forest clans
Fled fatherland,
Where now the palefaced man's
Villages stand
By the Keeuka.

10.

Yet the blue waters look
Upward as bright
As ere the Indian took
Westward his flight
From the Keeuka.

11.

So, through all ages and
Changes of time,
Truth shall a mirror stand,
Calm and sublime,
Like the Keeuka.

V .

The clan that whilome dwelt upon this shore,
And rowed the lake, and roamed the forest grand,
On earth wield bow and tomahawk no more ;
For they have all gone to the Spirit Land.
In sooth, they were a fierce and faithful band,
Kind unto friend and cruel unto foe ;
With one, the peacepipe passed from hand to hand,
With other meeting, fatal blood must flow :
They loved, they hated, and they knew no morals moe.

VI .

Poor, simple savages ! they ne'er had learned
Mock virtue's many words and ways of guile ;
If sense of wrong within their bosom burned,
It shone outside not in a glozing smile,
But lit the eye in nature's noble style ;
Nor brooked they insult's buffet on the cheek,
To turn the other Christianly the while ;
But whoso outrage dared to do or speak,
Prepared for peril : arm ! and on him vengeance wreak !

VII.

Thus they dispensed with that infernal scheme
Of wordy mysteries in musty tomes,
Which mimics justice with the little gleam
Of right and reason in the brain of momes
That practice twaddle in forensic domes,
Where Impudence gulps nonsense to the lees,
And thence in gaseous fermentation foams :
Ne need of such a lore of lies had these
Who dwelt here by the troutbrooks underneath the trees.

VIII.

Nor needed that stupendous fiction they,
Whereby an image stamped upon an ore,
Becomes a god, to which men homage pay
Devoutly, and which ardently adore ;
For game through wood, and in the water store
Of fish, were equal to their vital want ;
(They wanted life, and wanted little more ;)
Among them nor did gilded Greatness flaunt,
Nor pining Poverty their happy homeplace haunt.

IX.

In very deed, their language did ignore
Even the words of wealth ; for Commerce yet
Here on the water and along the shore
Her many-mottoed seal had never set,
With cant of loss and profit, tare and tret :
Ne hunks was hero in the savage life,
Nor smockfaced Foppery mote honor get ;
But eloquence, and prowess in the strife
With tomahawk and warclub, bow and battleknife.

X.

So they, ere mother Nature had grown old,
Her dearest children, at her wholesome breast
Drank life, and felt her fond arms round them fold,
And her sweet bosom to their hearts be pressed ;
Nor nursing Art had ever them caressed,
Or dandled yet on her adoptive knee,
Like as her fosterchildren, cursed and blessed
With knowledge, who had come across the sea
To damn the future of the ignorantly free.

X I .

Yet what the nation of the copper clan
That peopled here the lakeside long ago,
Or how afar their russet race began,
Or whence their dusky blood mote have its flow,
In good sooth, me it matters not to know ;
Enough, that truer Mingoes¹ never drew
An arrow to the head, or twanged a bow,
Or battleax in warfare featly threw,
Than the Keeukas, dwellers by these waters blue.

X II .

And from the mighty Mohawk sagamore,²
Whene'er, as now, his fleet runners ran
Through the Five Nations, making every shore
Of all these linked lakes clamor with the ban
Of battle, yelling it from clan to clan—
Rise! Mingoes, rise! your Agresquee³ invoke,
And follow where the Mohawk leads the van!—
As the first warwhoop into echoes broke,
The yare Kecukas rallied at their council oak.

X III.

It was a grandly overtopping tree,
That full five hundred years had seen, or moe,
Since in its litesome youth it danced the glee
Which piping winds wont through its branches blow ;
But now it bowed its head sublimely slow,
Still youthful, though majestically old ;
For it alate had shaken off the snow,
Old age's token, and anew did hold
Its green magnificence up in the morning's gold.

X IV .

Upon the stilly smoothness of the lake
The glaring glory of the rising sun
Lay molten ; meanwhile musically brake
The woodbirds into matins, one with one
Altern or choral, yet discordant none.
Awakened from the sweet sleep they had slept,
As if in sorrow that their dreams were done,
The young leaves tearfully the dewdrops wept,
And to the breeze that roused them, low complaining kept.

X V .

Here, after clamor, were the lakers met
At the fresh prime in silence. All had died
The echoes ; and with dewy weeping wet,
The leaves, whose plaints the brisk brooks did deride,
Brightening gan whisper, as they now espied
The gathered council. In the center rose
The chief, Moneeka : he from side to side
Prelusive eyeglance of mute meaning throws,
And then in lava speech his soul volcanic flows.

X VI .

“Our kinsmen cry to us from out their blood !
Their ghosts went scalpless to the Spirit Land !
How many seasons more shall fall and bud,
Ere we avenge them with the bloody hand ?
The Mohawk leads the Nations Triple-Clanned ;
Him follow to the death in glory’s trail !
Ere three more glooms have wrapped, or mornings fanned
The forest, smite the vile Catawbas pale !
For each our kindred slain, make ten their widows wail !

XVII.

Last midnight I stood yonder on the cliff,
While the Great Spirit's many starry eyes
Were gazing on me, and with every whiff
Of winds among the pinetops, there did rise
The shriek of some soul unavenged. Disguise
Your faces with the paint! Anoint your hair!
Fill up your quivers! Make the woods and skies
Ring with your warsong! Go ye and prepare
The feast of blood for brothers shrieking in the air!"

XVIII.

So ended he: forthwith five hundred throats
Him hoarsely grunted guttural applause;⁵
Then, clamoring in wrath's barbarian notes,
Demanded lead them whereso vengeance was,
In crouching ambush or in battle's jaws.
Again came silence, deep as slumbers bring
To night's mid darkness, but of briefer pause;
For fiercely now the braves began to sing,
And full-fledged fury rose on music's wildest wing.

1 .

By the widows bewailing
The horrible slaughterers,
By the bones of our brothers
Picked bare by the ravens,
By the tears unavailing
Of fatherless daughters
And sorrowing mothers,
Revenge on the cravens !
Revenge ! revenge !

2 .

Ere the grapes begin bunching
By brook and by fountain,
Ere the broods of young throstles
Burst into sweet laughter,
The wolves shall be munching
Our foes on the mountain,
And bloody scalptossels
Shall swing from the rafter !
Revenge ! revenge !

3.

Now, ye souls of our brothers,
Unlaid and in trouble,
Cease shrieking and sighing;
For ere in his blanket
The Great Spirit smothers
This moon, there shall bubble
Hot blood from hearts dying,
And ye shall have drank it!
Revenge! revenge!

XIX.

Now died the hideously mournful strain—
The mad monotonous refrain did rave
Itself to death, and into stillness wane;
But the echoes yet its elfin spirit save,
And bear it over blue Keeuka's wave;
Toss it from steep to steep along the shore,
And beat it crying through each rocky cave.
Straightway the council broke, and savage tore
The vail of heaven with their whooped outrageous roar.

XX.

And next they scattered each a several way ;
Some to their wigwams nigh, and some to boat,
Where, tethered in the ripples' tiny sway,
The prim prows on the pebbly margin smote,
As though along the blue to be afloat
They felt a live impatience. Then the dip
Of paddles beat time all the while each throat
Uttered a low, wild chant, unstopped by lip,
And so the trim canoes did o'er the waters trip.

XXI.

The voices, with the distance, tapered down
To silence ; and thence till the setting sun
The plumy thrapple of the mockbird brown,
Swoln full of rich, round warble, glibly spun
Its tangled string of carols, never done :
The tunable lovetwitter round the nests,
The susurration of the bees, the run
Of quick brooks, blent their sweet sounds, till the west's
Vanguard of hosting stars displayed their brilliant crests.

X X I I .

What time the twilight thickened into gloom,
A dome of flame shot up its flashing spire
Beside the lake, as though for Day a tomb
Were built there—dead Day's monument of fire.
Keeuka's face glowed sudden red with ire,
Uncurtained thus of darkness in her sleep ;
And all at once one whooping hubbub dire,
Like roaring ocean, swept the forest deep,
Then sunk in echoing ebb, a tide of noises neap.

X X I I I .

The light upon the beach was for a token ;
The startling whoops, responses to the sign ;
And now, amid a silentness unbroken,
Into the circle of that signaled shine,
From out the dark of thickets' branchy twine,
There glided tall forms, flocking all the shore ;
While o'er the water, flame-wrought into wine,
The same canoes that had at morn tofore,
And toward that ruddy glare was pointed every prore.

XXIV.

Anon each slender bark its beak had strook,
And each swart rower leaped upon the strand ;
Portent of battle scowled in every look,
And clutched the tomahawk in every hand.
Ah ! then to see the banded cohort stand
In sullen circle round that reaching blaze,
It was the dread sublime, the gloomy grand :
Their frightful features hold a dismal gaze,
And not among them one one sign of life betrays.

XXV.

For brief thus motionless and mute stood they ;
Then, as from impulse of one common thought,
Burst into brutal war's infernal bray,
To horrid dissonance of fury wrought :
With hungry foretaste of revenge distraught,
In dance they raged, in frantic song they ranted ;
The onslaught shammed, the mimic battle fought,
And gorged the feast, which late with life had panted ;
Nor ceased until the moon her downward journey slanted.

X X V I .

The fire had dwindled, and the moon gone down ;
The stars were waiting for the king of day,
To bow their fealty to his golden crown,
And then from his dread presence shrink away ;
Deep in the dreaming lake's clear bosom lay
A vision of the heavens : save the trill
Of night's lone troubadour upon the spray,
Poet of birds, the mournful whippowil,
Where late loud orgies roared, now all was widely still.

CANTO II.

I.

FORTH victor Dawn his flamy banner flung
Over the east horizon's battlement ;
Yet Night's forlorn hope, Lucifer, yclung,
Last of her bright host, to the sky's blue tent
Till round him it was all on fire ; upset
The birds their sweet applauses ; blushed the water
Under the ardent gaze of Orient :
Again were met the warriors by the water,
And eke their women mournful, mother, wife, and daughter.

II.

Oh War ! iconoclast of woman's love !
Thou breaker of the idols of her heart !
Thou pomp of murder, that dost flout above
All penalty ! that sitst enthroned apart
From vulgar crimes, and crowned with glory art !
While man may so heroically die
That his great name on time's historic chart
Shall loom through ages, woman's is the sigh—
The tear, which fame's cold breath may freeze, but can not dry.

III.

Again were met the warriors by the water ;
And, sooth, they showed romantic to the view ;
Wood-born Bellona, Nature's wanton daughter,
Contrasted gayly with the dark green hue
Of her plain mother's garb, begemmed with dew :
Kirtles of red from zone to middle thigh,
Their plumes of scarlet, moccasins of blue,
Their skins tattooed with stripes of every dye,
Combined as fine a scene as ever flared to eye.

I V .

Upon their shoulders painted quivers hung,
Full of the arrowy death ; in each right hand
The nervy bow, to half-strained tension strung ;
And in each bead-embroidered kirtleband
The tomahawk and scalpknife : there they stand
In conflux gloomy, like a thundercloud
Swoln by the winds and with a rainbow spanned—
Relentless in revenge, of prowess proud,
And yet with love's fond passion genially endowed.

V .

And though no tears welled up to quench the flame
Of war's wild ardor blazing in their eyes,
The hour of parting to their bosoms came
With a quick agony ; the tender ties
Of home affections, braided, in the skies,
Of man's high nature, wrought upon the strings
Of their strong hearts—Oh ! what if this emprise
Should leave their bodies cold and breathless things
In far lands, clawed by wolves and flapped by ravens' wings!¹

1.

The flowers may spring up in the trails
That wind to where the roebucks dwell—
The corn may tossel in the vales
Ere we come home : farewell ! farewell !

2.

Young moon may wax, and old moon wane,
And fall may brown, and spring may bud,
Nor we yet come ; we may be slain,
Each sleeping on his mat of blood !

3.

But if we never come again
To greet home's kisses, glad and warm,
Be sure that more than Mingo men
Were struck in battle's thunderstorm !

4.

Farewell ! farewell ! along the shore
Our boats are beating on the shoals :
Farewell !—if we come back no more,
Then, meet us in the Land of Souls !

VI.

So sung the sachem ; all the braves respond
To the sad chant with sorrowful concilain ;
Then of his loved ones each one takes a fond,
Perchance a last embrace. But, hark ! a name
Moneeka utters in a tone of blame :
Lelu ! Lelu ! she of the spirit bland,
Image of her, and only not the same
That death had taken to the Spirit Land—
His fair child, why not she one of that tearful band ?

VII.

List ! like a choir of cuckoos comes a flow
Of flutestops in the gushes of the breeze ;
A fitful strain, now louder, now more low,
Now sweetly muffled in the thick of trees.
The timid squaws, transported, fall to knees
In adoration, while from brave to brave
Fly ravished whispers in the tone of bees ;
When, lo ! from out the mouth of Spirit Cave
There darts a light canoe, and glides along the wave.

V III.

It was Lelu's ! they knew it by the beak—
A silver arrow, flashing o'er the blue
As Venus o'er the east when morn doth wreak
Its ardor on the meek, pale sky. It flew
The waters witchingly, and quickly drew
Whom into sight it wafted ; lo, the Sprite
Of Spirit Cave ! and with him, lo, Lelu !
She plied the plashing paddle left and right,
While music's chain linked he with flying fingers light.

I X .

Eftsoons the tiny prow was laid aland ;
The music stopped ; and bounded up the bank
Fawnlike Lelu. The pretty boldness bland
Of innocence, the modest meekness frank
Of maidenhood, did beautifully prank
Her large brown eyes ; flowed down her long black hair,
Whereunder her round bosoms rose and sank
Like billows ; nature's delicacy bare
Adorned her : O ! she was bewilderingly fair.

X.

Though in amazement, every warrior's heart
Beat big responses to her tripping feet,
Proud of her loveliness. Where stood apart
The wondering sachem, thither soon her fleet,
Light footsteps bore her. Him the sudden greet
Of ardent lips roused from astonishment—
The thrill of filial kisses, fondly sweet:
“Sire, the Great Spirit my Okkee² hath sent
To talk to you of peace ere battle's bow be bent.”

X I.

She waved her hand, and up the beach came he
Who had so oft mysterious charmed the shore
With music's witchery—Lelu's Okkee:
Majestical ! his brow such beauty wore
As a white cloud by sundown tinted o'er ;
His hair bright brown, his eyes were lakelike blue,
And looked as though they held all heretofore
And all hereafter in their raptured view,
And all high knowledge and all holy passion knew.

XII.

He paused beside the old oak, and a space
His soul seemed brooding live thoughts beaked with fire,
Hatching them into words. Upon his face
There glowed the light of truth's divine desire,
Wherein his brows did heavenward aspire,
Like wings of eagle in the glow of morn.
Anon his spirit struck the full-toned lyre
Of Mohawk speech, and eloquence was born,
Swaying those hearts as winds of summer sway the corn.

XIII.

“If the Great Spirit is Allfather, then,
Keeukas ! to the whole world ye are kin—
All brothers of the brotherhood of men,
Of the same blood your hands would dabble in.
Why pant ye for the battle to begin ?
The wolf, the panther live by act of prey ;
But ye—but what do ye by carnage win ?
Revenge ! What ! brother for slain brother slay ?
Such vengeance were the seed of slaughter aye and aye.

X I V .

Murder is mother unto murder ; so,
Thou sachem ! every scalp thy warriors take,
Gets them at least one other deathful foe,
Whose kindred breast shall feverously ache
With such mad thirst as naught but blood can slake :
Each heart struck cold, makes hot a hostile hand !
Hence, wrath's fierce billows shall still ever break
Successive on the shore of Spirit Land,
While braves against braves be for vengeful warfare clanned.

X V .

Bury the red ax, then ! go not to battle !
No rainbow follows fight's wild hurricane ;
But all love's bloom is blasted where the rattle
Of arrowy hail melts to the bloody rain :
The ties between the slayer and the slain,
In being severed, rend all other strings
Of the live heart's affection-tangled skein.
Go not to battle ! but who battle brings
Upon your home, strike ! Justice then his deathsong sings .”

X VI.

Such godlike speech from whom they deemed divine,
Wrought quick conversion in the heroes' breasts—
Made bright bliss in the women's tearful eyne ;
For now war's furies drop their snaky crests,
And tamely crawl back to their secret nests.
“New truths from Spirit Land !” Moneeka cried ;
“Let us obey their beautiful behests !”
By throwing down their arms, the braves replied ;
And joy thrilled bosoms that had just with sorrow sighed.

X VII.

“In sweet peace, then, each to his wigwam go—
In true love, then, and lighten woman's toil ;
Fix him a home where nature's beauties grow,
And, better far than brave in battle's broil,
Be brave in labor, victor of the soil !”
While tongue thus utters, forth from his blue ee
Persuasion's fascinating folds uncoil.
They each obey ; and soon at that old tree
Are left none save Lelu and her divine Okkee.

XVII.

“Now, while Keeuka holds the blushing face
Of young Morn in her bosom, and the note
Of lovelorn turtle fills the woody place,
Over the waters in our cedarn boat,
O'er the blue waters, darling, let us float;
And, as the ripple from the curved keel slips
With silver tinkle, all the day devote
To pleasant converse, till soft twilight clips
The sunbeams, leaving in the stars their golden tips.”

XIX.

So sweetly had addressed he sweet Lelu,
In language learned from Anglic mother's lips;
For well the pretty squaw its meaning knew,
And from his words took love as wild bee sips
From strange blooms honey;—then, the black eclipse
Of thick hair from her forehead pushed away,
Passion's quick wings touched there their trembling tips:
O that such blisses might but bide for aye!
Worth thousand common ages one such blissful day.

XX.

Ne'er harpist harping with his golden harp
The Orphic miracles of raging song,
Could half sing love—love's rapture keen and sharp,
That thrills through heart and each hot vein along,
A pleasure-pain, unspeakable and strong!
Ye, in whose bosoms this unresting dove
With soft, white plumes, yet fierce beak, once hath clong,
Ye know how winged words far it soars above,
And how in place like this, love must be doubly love.

XXI.

The woods' wide amphitheater of green;
The sky's high overcanopy of blue;
The lake, arena for the coming scene
Of love's boat floating with its dual crew;
The birds, which, as they sung, and singing flew,
And flying flashed the dewdrops, one might deem
Nature's winged halleluiahs; airs that blew
Through leafy lips aroma: all did seem
The kingdom come of passion's paradisean dream.

X X I I .

Just where the green made border to the blue,
A while they stood in silent muse, as though,
Of all the glories that around them grew,
That arched above, that liquid lay below,
Into their soul they felt the essence flow ;
Into their soul ; they now were two souls one,
Their former selves love had commingled so :
The phases of life opposite were done—
As sun and moon's conjunction leaves naught but the sun.

X X I I I .

“Okkee !—Right true, thou art Okkee, and this
Is the soul’s home. For, did I understand,
Thou said that love is spirit ; then, I wis
Enough love here to make it Spirit Land.
It must be so ; for fancy never planned
For hope a joy more blissful in that realm—
Is it not all a dream ? Give me thy hand :
’Tis real !—Loose the prow now from the elm ;
Sit thou and talk to me, Lelu will hold the helm.”

X X I V .

The twain embarked, the proa swung from shore;
Few strokes of dextrous paddle sent it clear,
To waft away where breeze soever bore,
Through the bright concave of an azure sphere—
Blue sky above, blue sky beneath the mere.
So sphered between the two skies glode the bark
Alone and still, as though a deluge here
Had drowned of passion every vital spark
Save only love, and this were saved love's tiny ark.

X X V .

Lelu first that enraptured silence broke.
“Thou knowst thou promised twice twelve moons ago,
That when I learned the language which thou spoke,
I should the story of thy past time know:
As beautifully as the blossoms blow,
Thy words have oped their meanings in my mind,
Till well I comprehend them now, I trow;
So, my Okkee! thy thread of life unwind,
And braid it up with strands of golden talk entwined.”

CANTO III.

I.

“My soul’s first felt stir was by such a lake;
Memory dawned on such a scene of blue;
And thence have waters in my spirit’s make
Grown passions, still or stormy, ever new:
The brook, young love, meandrily untrue;
The lake, sweet dream of poetry’s devotion;
The river, lust of fame, which greater grew
Forever in its nearer seaward motion:
Wild muse of God’s infinity, the awful ocean.

II.

O! I have always loved the living waters;
While yet a very child, I sought the brooks,
And wooed them as Romance's pretty daughters,
And trysted with them in sequestered nooks,
And gloated on them with most passioned looks,
And wived them to my soul, and hugged them there:
The crystal pools were Fancy's open books,
Where rippy fingers of the poet Air
Wrote roundelay that still my heart doth fondly bear.

III.

In noisy flocks while other children played,
Nurse Nature spread her lap and tended me,
And so before me her delightsments laid
That I was charmed to sit upon her knee,
And feel my heart with her great heart agree:
There was a spirit by the lake and river,
Which I have since found grander by the sea,
That made my heartchords with a transport quiver,
And whispered, Be a dreamer, not a worldly liver.

IV.

That whisper to my life became a fate ;
And though I knew naught of its meaning then,
It soon was taught me by their scorn and hate,
Who slave, eat, sleep—swarm, sweat, and sleep again,
Moil, cheat, hoard, strut through threescore years and ten ;
Who rise the scum atop the heated world,
And hide pure ore, themselves the dross of men :
The lips of such, contemptuous pity curled,
And at the worthless boy their shafts of mock were hurled.

V.

And even parents chid me for a drone—
As though the honey for life's hive were wrought
By buzzers only, none by musers lone !
As though it better were to gain a groat
Than win from nature an eternal thought !
As though bright truths that in the still soul spring
Like twilight stars in heaven, were of naught
Because they have not the metallic ring !
As though man's intellect were not his Godward wing !

VI.

They said that I would never come to thrift,
And that upon the sea of fortune soon,
Sailless and helmless, I would be adrift,
Except I left ygazing on the moon,
And idly dreaming underneath the noon;
That who would clamber honor's toilsome hight,
His feet must well be shod with silver shoon,
And eye, like eagle's in the sunward flight,
Kept keen and steady on the yellow-golden light.

VII.

And so I hated such a world of gold,
And turned me from its dazzle to the hue
More mild of summer woods, of skies unrolled
Above them grandly, and of waters blue.
I envied every bird that round me flew,
Its unreproved delight, and longed for wings,
To seek some paradise man never knew,
Where I might drink all pleasures at their springs—
Where thoughts were honeybees without the poison stings.

VIII.

I mused on God's world, and I loved to live;
I mused on man's, and I desired to die:
Power, beauty, majesty, all that could give
The soul suggestion of its nature high,
Were lavished here to prompt it to the sky;
And yet immortal beings wallowed, ate,
And fattened, like the creatures of the sty—
Ay, scouted him with grunts of brutish hate,
Who dared eschew their slough, and seek a nobler fate.

IX.

Such was my early estimate of men;
And black misanthropy imbued my heart:
And yet I sighed for whom to love. The wren,
The robin, whose quick wings would round me dart
Among the thick green leaves, were each a part
Of passion's duad; I, I was a self!
With no sweet lips to kiss away the smart
That poverty endures of vulgar pelf;
No mate with me to delve our nature's richest delf.

X .

I went to school, but not to pore on books ;
I knew to read, nor sought such knowledge more :
I went, and studied love in woman's looks,
And learned by heart that beautifulest lore,
And conned the pleasant lesson o'er and o'er.
Life now displayed a fuller, fairer phase
Than ever it had shown to me before ;
For lonesome melancholy's gloomy haze
Is quick dispelled in human sympathy's bright rays.

X I .

The schooldame was a fair and gentle creature,
Whose soul seemed chastened by some sacred wo,
Which had stamped angel on her every feature,
And made her accents musically low,
As when soft winds through lyre Eolian blow ;
And left within her sad and holy eyes
The passion tears just ready forth to flow ;
And given to her such a spirit guise
As had small need of change to fit it for the skies.

XII .

She gently forth the mind's first twinkles brought
As gloamin brings the stars—a mother mild
(The better mother, mother of its thought)
To the persuadable and plastic child.
In love's sweet suasion when she faintly smiled,
She took the fond heart further toward the land
Where life is love—where is no anger wild—
Than all devices terror ever planned
To scare man heavenward by keeping hellfire fanned.

XIII .

She was not old ; and yet there was a girl
Just in the first teen—woman's rosebud year—
That called her mother—But swift memories whirl
Within my brain—forgive me if the tear
Will start, Lelu—this touches me so near !
That little maid who called the schooldame mother,
At once filled all my soul as sunrise here
Fills all yon hollow blue: it was that other,
That winged affection, past the chrysalid of brother.

XIV.

And though she called me brother, yet I knew
It was a name with which she sought to hide
Love more than sisterly, that so did hue
Her being with its rainbows every side,
It never could be hidden or denied :
The passion panted crimson to her cheek,
Like summer sundown when the day has died,
And spoke so plainly in her cadence meek
That there was nothing left for formal words to speak.

XV.

And so no formal, jarring words were spoken,
To mar the music of our spirit spheres ;
No promises in hope, that might be broken
In the reality of after years.
But there were thrills that cut like pain, and tears
That had no motive, and sad-seeming sighs
That were not sorrowful, and doubts and fears
Kerneled with secret blisses, and soft eyes
That held the deep infinity of bluest skies.

X VI.

The mother saw our burning lives thus leaping
Like two quick flames together, and she knew
That hope of love's beatitude was steeping
Our whole existence with its purple hue ;
Yet not displeased was she : the glistening dew
Of holy tenderness her blue eyes brimmed,
As looked she on us, and believed me true,
And in her fond anticipation limned
The picture of our oneness ere her dirge were hymned.

X VII.

But never she such consummation saw :
The shaft of sorrow, which had stuck so long
Deep in her heart, Death gently forth did draw,
And make her happy ; and he did not wrong.
But there were those to whom the guilt hath clung
Of her sad lot, and shall forever cling ;
Men e'en respectable among the throng—
Men ? Hellkites ! such as from Abaddon bring,
And over earth the seeds of rank damnation fling.

X V I I I .

These hucksters of hell fury, who have dens
In every haunt, and bane the course of life
From Splendor's palaces to Squalor's pens—
Unparadise fair homes with fiendish strife,
And stab at heaven with assassin's knife—
These crossed the high career of that brave youth
Whom she had wed, and from the bliss of wife
Dejected her to worse than widow's ruth :
He was a brute sot, spoiled of manhood's pride and truth.

X I X .

He drank himself a devil, and then died ;
And at his wife and child men pointed shame—
Shame to be mourners of state homicide !
Shame to be victims of black crimes that claim
The sanction of the law, and have no blame !
Great God ! the blood runs like a sluice of fire
Within me, as I contemplate the frame
Of civilization, and I wish a lyre
Of thunder power, to batter it, base, dome, and spire !

XX.

But she was dead ! the drunkard's widow now
Lay there in Heaven's refuge, past all scorn,
The euthanasy's beauty on her brow,
As though she dreamed of resurrection morn,
And glimpsed the glory of the second-born.—
Oh ! blisses must be infinite on high,
To number out the tears of that forlorn,
Motherless girl, and compensate each sigh :
No words could paint her wo ; mine may not, dare not try.

XXI.

The sexton smoothed the sod above the dead,
And gently then they bore the child away,
The only mourner, though hot tears were shed
Even by stern-browed men that funeral day.
They brought the sad one in our home to stay ;
And when the sob had settled to the sigh,
And calm submission on her forehead lay,
With cheek to cheek, beneath the evening sky,
Oft would we sit, and muse of angels, she and I.

XXII .

And at such times the stars had earnest looks
Of sympathy, as though each held a tear;
And in the silvery babble of the brooks
Almost a human sobbing we could hear;
Such soft wind-whispers as a spirit's fear
Of too much revelation seemed to quell,
Low sibilated solace to the ear
Of sorrow ; and the bulbul in the dell,
With melody's nepenthe crowned the holy spell.

XXIII .

So passed we all the lovely summer eves,
Our souls commingling like two waterways
Within some pleasant valley full of leaves ;
And when the autumn scarlet gan to blaze
Among the treetops, and the mild, warm days,
Like watching women, softly glided round
His dying bed, as though they strove to raise
The good old Year up from his dreamy swoond,
New brightness her blue ee, her cheek new blushes foun'.

X X I V .

Then through the glory of that mellow weather,
We traced the streams, we stroamed adown the glyn,
And climb atop the piny hills together ;
Nor wist we aught of danger we were in,
For neither one was ware of any sin :
We leaned our foreheads o'er the selfsame book,
Along which some immortal mind had been,
And, mingling with our mingled spirits, took
Its power in, as this lake bosoms yonder brook.

X X V .

The trees put on their ghostly robes of snow
At length, and we—But how that winter time
We passed, beside the hearthstone's cheery glow,
Edened in young love's always-summer clime—
And how, too, in the next year's bloomy prime,
We told with flowers what ne we dared with tongue—
Then summer through, and all the fall sublime,
How clung our hearts, and close and closer clung—
Pangs to remember: be it to oblivion flung !

XXVI.

Two years had passed, and we were not the same,
Though same in age: she was a woman now,
I yet a boy. Still with a lip of flame
She breathed me burning words, and sealed her vow
Of truth on blushing cheek and beating brow.
But by and by an other came to woo
That loveliness to which my heart did bow
As does the Hindoo unto his Gooroo ;
And he was all a stranger, none knew whence or who.

XXVII.

But it was said that some illustrious hero
Of bygone ages mythically dim,
(Some Cesar great—or haply e'en some Nero !)
By deeds immortal had ennobled him,
And him enriched with coffers full to brim.
Besides nobility, he had a mien
Of winningness, with person tall and trim,
And tongue possessed of power almost to wean
Angels from heaven unto hell's eternal threne.

XXVIII.

Then Jessie grew so sisterly to me—
So friendly-calm to me so passion-tossed !—
And blushed so bashful to the stranger's ee,
I knew in heart love's paradise was lost :
Between me and hope's life-tree cherubs crossed
Their flaming swords ; the night of cold despair
Came down with darkness and with deadly frost
Upon my spirit's blowth, and withered there
All that was beautiful, all that was flushly fair.

XXIX.

I saw them wedded—ay, stood nigh the altar,
And froze my tears down 'neath an icy pride,
While in a voice that never seemed to falter,
She spoke herself away, an other's bride.
I wished her joy then, and with haughty stride—
So haughty it betrayed my humbled heart—
I hurried home, and there, alone, untied
My heartstrings loose to anguish. With a start
I rose and manned myself : forthwith I must depart.

XXX.

With tears that blurred and blinded, and with words
Of long farewell, I parted from the spot
Where land, lake, sky, where woods, and brooks, and birds,
All minded me what better were forgot.
I can not think it is a mournful lot,
To leave the scene where love has died, for aye,
To quit the home where sympathy is not,
Where all bids go, and naught invites to stay:
It is as if relief, to wander thence away.

CANTO IV.

I.

“AWAY! away! My swarming thoughts had stings
That pricked me madly onward, and my feet,
To give them fleetness, took on dead Love’s wings:
Away! away! with heart of bursting beat—
Away! away! no matter what to meet.
Not till the stars of nightfall had already
Flocked to their places, and their magic sweet
Shed on me, did my brain’s wild torrent eddy
To consciousness, and flow in reason’s current steady.

II.

I startled at the newness of the scenes ;
Thought of my plight struck like a stab of steel :
A youth just past the midway of my teens,
Unschooled in life, unbacked by golden weal—
Nor tact nor taste to tug at fortune's wheel,
Nor robe of ancestry my name to don,
And naught on earth save heart to virtue leal !
But such concern was not for me to con :
What was the future worth ?—I sternly strided on.

III.

All through that night the farmhouse bandogs bayed me,
And ghosts that stories told to childhood raised,
Stole out from gloomy corners, and waylaid me ;
But still I took one star, and on it gazed,
And followed it, till kindling morning blazed
On glary domes and flashing steeples high,
And art's magnificence my dim eyes dazed :
I found myself a mighty city nigh,
Whose matin hymn to Mammon gan to din the sky.

IV.

As one that stands upon a wreck, and feels,
Before he plunges in the horrid deep,
A mortal shudder, and with faintness reels,
So I above that city on the steep
Stood dreading, as though death were in the sweep
Of the great human billows there that rolled
With roar of action, and with surge and leap
Forever dashed upon a strand of gold :
But so I stood not long ;—despair had made me bold.

V.

I pressed on, and was quickly swallowed in
By that life-Maelstrom, and my selfhood drowned
In its abysmalness. The pomp, the din
Whirled me in wilderment, and struck me stound :
I wandered through the streets, and gazed around
Upon the spectacle so strange to me—
The wonders of the new world I had found—
The stormy motions of a living sea,
Where virtue's ripples low and sin's high surges be.

V I .

My spent soul swum ; the whirlpool narrowing round me,
Sucked to the center in a swoon at last,
Wherein I sunk, and deep oblivion drowned me.
When the inanity of that swoon passed,
I seemed as from a booming ocean cast
Upon a silent shore: I lay alone,
Till soon an old man's forehead, grandly vast,
Hung o'er me like a moon ;—that old man's tone
Was thunder set to tune and muffled to a moan.

V I I .

In accents that were full of soothing pleasure—
Though every word was ponderous with thought
And with the weight of his majestic presence—
He said that Heaven had one blessing brought
To recompense a life with sorrows fraught,
In giving me to him ; that I should stay
In his home thenceforth always, and that naught
Should sever us till Death his sythe should sway,
And mow the mortal bonds of sympathy away.

VIII.

With words, and kindnesses that have no words,
That old man cheered and cherished me, his son
By heart's adoption: solace such as girds
Wo's zenith with a blue horizon, run
Through all his act, and on my spirit won
As clear sky wins upon a passing storm.
The passion chaos of my life was done,
The vague infinitudes began to swarm
Concrete, and orbs of thought to gather into form.

IX.

My fosterfather was a great savan,
Versed in the sciences of ancient years,
And in the histories of ancient man;
His large mind shepherded the flocking spheres
Upon the plains of heaven; rapt to tears,
He drank thought's written immortalities
From rare old words that have not charmed the ears
Of men for decades of long centuries:
And me he pointed where the truth of greatness is.

X .

I followed earnestly; for thus I hoped
To distance memory and fly regret:
Mine eyes the starry eyes of night outcoped
In steadiness of vigilance, and met
The gaze of Lucifer at morn, to get
The pearls of knowledge from the depths of toil,
And in my crown of life their beauty set;
Nor weariness could aught my ardor foil,
As toward the Central Soul I circled, coil by coil.

X I .

The languages in which old glory lives;
The once-dim truths that genius has brought nigh.
As telescope the stars; the power that gives
To lettered speech such forms as never die:
I studied these, and studied too the why
Of man's existence, and nigh crazed my brain
With God's great mysteries, as toward the sky
My soul leaped up like wild beast in the chain,
And tore itself and raved in ignorance's pain.

XII.

Years passed like dreams—for we were not a part
Of the world's wakeful stir—divinest dreams,
Of poetry, philosophy, and art,
And liberty, and glory, and all themes
Of thought; the stars, those everlasting gleams
Of God in heaven; life, this endless chase
Of childhood after rainbows; death, which seems
The lifting of the vail from Mystery's face;
And immortality in some more happy place.

XIII.

So passed the years; and I, now grown a man,
Grew full of manhood's righteous hate of wrong.
I saw my country's freedom under ban;
I saw the weak down trodden by the strong;
I saw Toil's slavery, which had so long
Been sanctioned by the horror of starvation;
And from my fiery heart I hurled a song
That struck against the great heart of the nation,
And won the people's praise, the rulers' execration.

XIV.

The trained hounds of the law were let the slip,
And put on track. One morning, as I woke,
The old man, with his finger on his lip,
Stole to me in my closet; ere he spoke,
A saber felled him with a mortal stroke
Dealt from behind, and over me outpoured
His warm blood—Christ! how then my fury broke
From reason's leash! I snatched the smoking sword,
And with one horrid plunge the murderer's bosom gored.

XV.

God! 'twas the spoiler of my boyhood's love!
The spouse of Jessie! slayer of my sire!
He had twice murdered me!—I stood above
His body, and, with thews like steely wire,
Brandished the bloody blade, and dared the ire
Of twenty soldiers that had followed there.
They pressed upon me, and their curses dire
And clang of metal made the people ware;
Who then came bursting in, with eyes of desperate glare.

X VI.

They saw the old man they had loved so long,
Prostrate, his gray hair mopping in his gore;
They saw me who had dared to sing the song
Of liberty, encompassed by a score
Of swordmen; and they paused to see no more,
But rushed right on. Oh! then thick horrors rose
And scuffled there with bloody death!—the roar,
The shock, the clash, the stab, the deadly close,
All sounds, all sights that fight's infernal fury knows!

X VII.

I did my part for freedom in that fray;
I fought for life as manhood prompted me—
Nay, fought for what the brave throw life away,
The right to speak, to think, to act, to be—
To be! for what is being, if not free?
The frightful struggle thickened, and the ring
Of combat narrowed round, till in that sea
Of bloodshed, underneath the two-hand swing
(Of some huge weapon I went down, a senseless thing.

X V I I I .

How long I lay, I know not; when I woke,
A seabreeze, babbling of the billows, swayed
My hair back like a fond hand's gentle stroke,
And, smacking kisses on my temples, played
The dallying lover. Then a simple maid
With smooth brown hair and bashful hazel eyes,
Stooped o'er my bed, and on my forehead laid
Her soft hand. How her sympathizing sighs
Changed as she looked upon me—changed to joyful cries!

X I X .

My reason had returned! There crowded round,
With gratulation, men to tears elated,
Men on whose fronts King Toil had full embrowned
The stamp of true nobility, narrated
Never in heraldry, but elevated
Above the majesties of all the earth:
The Labor Lords, the rank by God created!
The Labor Lords, emblazoned by their worth!
I pride me that from this old line I took my birth.

XX.

I should have thought that I had been in slumber,
And dreamed those horrors, but my arm I raised,
And found it shrunk with days of weary number,
Spent in such fever as had racked and crazed.
But health came slowly back, and glad eyes gazed
Solicitous, as though a noise or motion
Imperiled me; and low, vague hints were phrased
Of danger of the law, of stern devotion
To me to th' death, and of a flight beyond the ocean.

XXI.

I knew the state sought me as murderer;
And so, before its vengeance tracked me there,
And with me them involved, who would incur
The risk of blood in my defense, and share
The gibbet with me, I resolved to dare
The world alone. One morning at the light,
Ere my preservers were awake or ware,
I stole from them, and where the sea's wings white
Flocked the near harbor, thitherward I took my flight.

X X I I .

Down in the fog, beside the gloomy river,
Three men stood round a corpse—some mortal who
Had spurned the gift of life back to the Giver—
Had rent the vail between the worlds in two,
And with bold sacrilege burst madly through.
It was a woman's form, a lovely bust
And round limbs that the wet robe seemed to woo
Embracingly, as conscious of the trust
Of loveliness it folded!—Oh! was Heaven just!

X X I I I .

Was there a God that ruled the right and wrong!
That suicide was Jessie! How my soul
Staggered with agony! There was the strong,
The wild despair of love, as on a scroll,
Writ on her forehead; years and years of dole
That has no word, showed in her thin, pale cheek;—
We raised her, and from next her heart out stole
His likeness, who had crushed that heart so meek:
How eloquent of woman's fondness did it speak!

X X I V .

And there were letters in her bosom hid,
Deathwarrants in his writing! I was glad
That my quick vengeance stabbed him as it did.
I put poor Jessie in the grave, and had
Her name in marble and a willow sad
Placed over her, and left her to her rest.
With civilization now my brain was mad;
With this last horror, hell burned in my breast:
I blessed the prow that pointed toward the savage west.

X X V .

I took the deck, and as the rushing keel
Furrowed the field of waters, and the sail
Strained bellying toward America, my zeal
For freedom greateened with the westward gale.
So shall it be in time hence, when the stale
And doted polities of olden time
Shall obsolesce in man's regard, and fail
Of his devotion: liberty sublime
Shall strengthen with the wind which wafts it to this clime.

X X V I .

O Liberty! thy symbol is the sea,
The great sea is thy symbol, and the waves
Which roll before the east wind, emblem thee;
Thou hast a motion like them: westward raves
The wild storm of oppression, till the caves
Of awful truth be stirred; and grandly then
Thou shalt rise up, and heave them to their graves,
Who brave thy tempest—tyrants over men,
Ingulfed in Revolution, ne'er to rise again!

X X V I I .

But what thoughts the sublimity of ocean
Stirred in me, I have told thee long ago,
Or tried to tell thee—for there is emotion
Upon the wide sea, that no words can show
The shadow of;—and told thee what a glow
I felt to make this free land; and before,
Thou knowst that I had told thee of my slow
Long wanderings till I reached Keeuka's shore,
And how at last I found thee, darling evermore!"

CANTO V.

I.

STILL sat she in the trance of listening,
And he stooped o'er to kiss her from her dream.
The sun aslope had now begun to fling
The trees' cool shadows on the lake, and stream
Down through the leaves in many a wavering gleam
Upon the water, as in sweet embrace,
And the low speech of passion that did beam
So holily upon each earnest face,
They glode on toward love's home—life's heavenliest place!

II.

Then through the long, dark archway wafted they,
Till far within, a golden stream of light,
Which down through cleft of granite flowed from day,
Showed them their grottoed home: of lofty hight
The spacious chamber, and the walls bedight
With graceful tapestry of painted pelt;
And there were seats, and couch, and books in sight—
Dear books, wherein Lelu had often spelt
Her way to glorious thoughts. How happy here they dwelt!

III.

Here wellnigh three years had they passed the days—
Here and along the lake's most hidden nooks—
Learning each other's language, how to phrase
In fittest words love's eloquence of looks;
And she had got the magic of his books
Shut in her soul, and he of her sweet lips
The music, sweeter than the flow of brooks:
So passed the days in fond companionships,
But parted always at the gloamin's first eclipse.

IV.

So passed the days of love's eternity;
So ebbed and flowed beneath the passion-moon;
So went, and left themselves a memory
Like gratitude for some most precious boon:
The dreamful night, glad morn, delightsome noon,
Chased in swift circle, staggering with bliss—
Blest circle, save that night came round too soon,
And brought the sweet pain of the parting kiss,
And morn, that brought the kiss of greeting, too remiss.

V.

They parted now, to meet again at morn;
One long kiss, and her bark went darting out
Into the lake, and he again was lorn.
His supper finished of the golden trout,
He hears the echoes of the well-known shout
That welcomes home Lelu's boat every eve.
He sleeps; he wakes; red dawn begins to flout
The stars; the quick strokes of her paddle cleave
The water: once more tears and smiles love's rainbow weave.

VI.

Thus early to the grot had come Lelu,
With terror in her voice and in her eye,
Relating that the Mohawks were in view
Upon the mountain, and their battlecry
Was, Death to the Keeukas! they must die!
For they are traitors to the Mingo name!
"To boat! to boat! Okkee, and let us fly
To council, and enkindle valor's flame
In hearts whose blood today must wash away this shame!"

VII.

He seized his gun, and charged it with the death—
A long, white mantle on his shoulder flung,
And took the boat; the passing of a breath,
And out upon the lake the vessel swung;
Then, every nerve with strong exertion strung,
To the other shore it flew like frightened bird:
A moment more, and stood Okkee among
The throng of braves, and gave his hot thought word,
Which lit their souls like flame by breath of fierce wind stirred.

VIII.

“Who fights for his dear home and for his life,
Him the Great Spirit’s truth shall justify;
Who falls defending from vile wrong his wife
And children, shall be blest in yonder sky.
Keeukas! your sworn deadly foes are nigh;
They come down like the thunder-tempest sweep:
It is your duty, meet them though ye die
At the first onslaught! let your keen points leap
Right to the death! The brave sink not alone to sleep.”

IX.

No plaudit followed; desperation’s hush
Held back their breath; but as a thundercloud
Takes shifting shapes of horror ere the rush
And roar of rain, so shaped that little crowd
Its phalanx for the storm of battle loud.
Moneeka stood the center of the van,
And on his forehead sat death glory-browed:
His eye along his banded warriors ran;
The thrill of that stern glance went through them, man by man.

X .

Down swept the fierce Five Nations like a torrent,
Firm stood the clan Keeuka like a rock—
Down swept with bows and flinted arrows horrent,
Firm stood with warknives, stirless as a stock,
Stirless as death, yet ready for the shock.
The hurricane of arrows strikes them ; still,
Stirless as death, they wait to interlock
The grapple of the fight that is to kill:
Each hot heart there had froze to that one icy will.

X I .

The mad assailants thrust aback their bows,
And with a yell that stunned the echoes dead,
And with raised tomahawks, rushed to the close :
A quick, sharp roar burst forth unwont and dread—
The Mohawk chieftain bit the dust and bled !
Out strode Okkee, clad in his cloak of white,
And the Five Nations cast their arms and fled
In disarrayed and wild disordered flight ;
While the Keeukas gazed in superstitious fright.

XII.

Out from their covert flocked the women glad.
But glad not long; Moneeka fainting fell:
Two arrowheads sunk in his vitals, had,
From the first onset, drained his lifeblood well.
All press around him—bear him to the dell
Where wells a cool spring; there to his last sleep
Lelu's love rocks him on the sobbing swell
Of her soft bosom, while with anguish deep—
Okkee his forehead bathing—loud his people weep.

XIII.

“Okkee! I feel thy hand like flesh and blood!
Thou art not spirit! Thou wilt be my son!
The spouse of my Lelu! Ere next spring bud
Upon my grave, let wedlock make ye one!—
My people, lo, your sachem!—I have run
My race—and I—would—rest now”—Sunk his head,
And gasped his breath: Moneeka's life was done.—
Him and the Mohawk laid they in one bed,
While hot tears over them sincerest sorrow shed.

X I V .

“The champion of the right, and of the wrong—
The hero of revenge, and of defense—
Lie side by side here in the slumber long,
Till the Great Spirit’s voice shall call them hence,
And all their truth and error recompense:
So death has bid their causeless quarrel cease,
And brought them friends before Omnipotence.
What prompture this to living love’s increase!
Why should life be a war, since death is such a peace!

X V .

Keeukas! if I be your chosen chief,
Revenge must all be buried in this grave;
Let peace put forth to blossom, and in leaf
Let love’s flush beauty o’er ye always wave!
Live here, and till the soil your fathers gave!
Cling to your homes here in the gloom of green!
Lelu and I dwell still in Spirit Cave,
And meet to mingle with ye morn and e’en—
They in the home of souls less blest than we, I ween!”

XVI.

Okkee had said ; and all in circle ringing,
Round him they danced, round him and his Lelu,
Round them they danced, in chorus gladly singing ;
Till toward his bloody doom the spent sun drew,
And lengthening on the lake the shadows grew.—
She half with love and half with sorrow sighed,
As round her zone his arm he gently threw,
And lifting her to boat, the paddle plied—
And o'er Keeuka glode the Chieftain and his Bride.

NOTES TO KEEUKA.

CANTO I.

1.

Enough, that truer Mingoes never drew
An arrow to the head, or twanged a bow.

STANZA XI, LINE 6.

The Five Nations consisted originally, or when first known to Europeans, of the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Cayugas, the Onondagas, and the Senecas. Among the French they had the appellation of Iroquois; among the Dutch, that of Maquas; but by the Indians of Virginia they were generally called Massawomekes; and by themselves, Mingoes. MCINTOSH.

2.

And from the mighty Mohawk sagamore.

STANZA XII, LINE 1.

The Mohawks were the head of the Five Nations; and the whole confederacy was frequently known by that name. The grand sachem, or sagamore, belonged to the ancient and original stock, from which the rest were said to be descended. To him all the inferior chiefs of the subordinate tribes were subject. MCINTOSH.

3.

Rise! Mingoes, rise! your Agresquee invoke.

STANZA XII, LINE 6.

Il parait que dans ces chansons (de guerre) on invoque le Dieu de la Guerre, que les Hurons appellent *Areskoui*, et les Iroquois, *Agreskoui*.

CHARLEVOIX.

4.

The Mohawk leads the Nations Triple-Clanned.

STANZA XVI, LINE 5.[®]

Each of these Nations is divided into three tribes, or families, who distinguish themselves by three different names, or ensigns—the Tortoise, the Bear, and the Wolf.

LORD CADWALLADER COLDEN.

5.

Him hoarsely grunted guttural applause.

STANZA XVIII, LINE 2.

Instead of acclamation, the Indians manifest their approbation by a hoarse, guttural grunt.

6.

Uttered a low, wild chant, unstopped by lip.

STANZA XX, LINE 8.

The Mohawk language, which is the language of the Five Nations, is wholly destitute of labials, or has no words which require the lips to be closed in pronouncing them.

MCINTOSH.

CANTO II.

1.

Should leave their bodies cold and breathless things
In far lands, clawed by wolves, and flapped by ravens' wings!

STANZA V, LINES 8, 9.

What shall he be ere night? Perchance a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing.

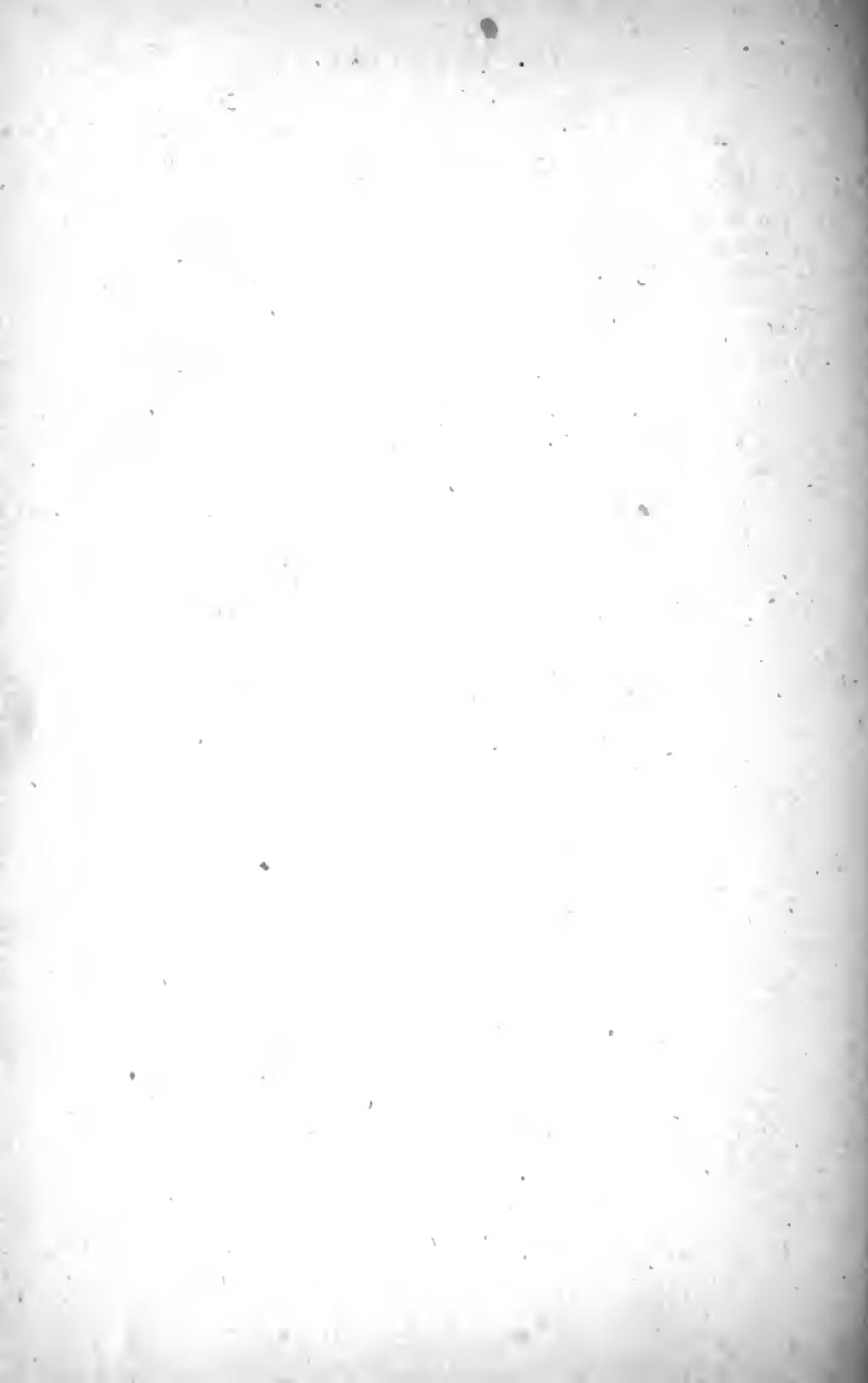
BYRON'S CORSAIR.

2.

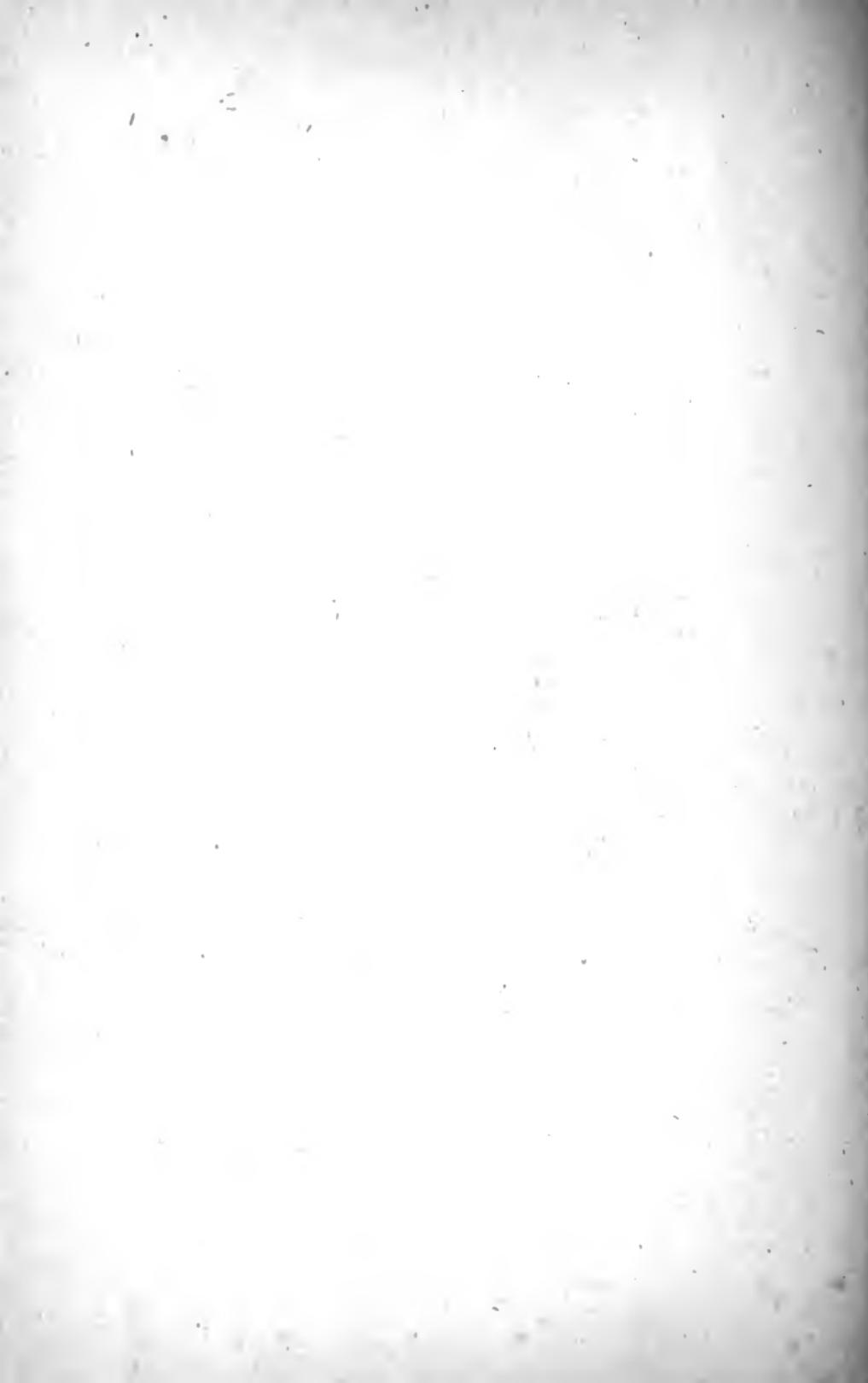
Sire, the Great Spirit my Okkee hath sent.

STANZA X, LINE 8.

The religion of the Indians is eminently polytheistic, recognizing one supreme god, whom they call the Great Spirit, one next inferior deity, who is accounted evil, and an infinite number of lower divinities, who, they suppose, pervade and animate all nature. These latter they distribute into two classes; the good and the evil. The good are guardian spirits; and by one of them every individual, from birth to death, is believed to be constantly attended. Of these tutelar deities each has a peculiar form: sometimes it is that of a bird; sometimes of a fish; a beast of prey; a human being. According to Charlevoix, the Algonquins style these spirits *Manitous*; the Hurons, *Okkis*, or, in English orthography, *Okkees*.



P O E M S .



RAIN ON THE ROOF.

WHEN the humid shadows hover
Over all the starry spheres,
And the melancholy darkness
Gently weeps in rainy tears,
'Tis a joy to press the pillow
Of a cottage-chamber bed,
And to listen to the patter
Of the soft rain overhead.

Every tinkle on the shingles
Has an echo in the heart;
And a thousand dreamy fancies
Into busy being start,

And a thousand recollections
Weave their bright hues into woof,
As I listen to the patter
Of the rain upon the roof.

Now in fancy comes my mother,
As she used to, years agone,
To survey her darling dreamers,
Ere she left them till the dawn;
O! I see her bending o'er me,
As I list to this refrain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

Then my little seraph sister,
With her wings and waving hair,
And her bright-eyed cherub brother—
A serene, angelic pair!—
Glide around my wakeful pillow,
With their praise or mild reproof,
As I listen to the murmur
Of the soft rain on the roof.

And an other comes to thrill me
With her eye's delicious blue;
And forget I, gazing on her,
That her heart was all untrue:
I remember but to love her
With a rapture kin to pain,
And my heart's quick pulses vibrate
To the patter of the rain.

There is naught in Art's bravuras,
That can work with such a spell
In the spirit's pure, deep fountains,
Whence the holy passions well,
As that melody of Nature,
That subdued, subduing strain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

THE HEROES OF THE PEN.

Sine caede, sine sanguine vicistis.—CICERO.

In the old time gone, ere came the Dawn
To the ages dark and dim,
Who wielded the sword with mightiest brawn,
The world bowed down to him:
The hand most red with the slaughtered dead,
Most potent waved command,
And Mars from the sky of glory shed
His light like a blazing brand.
But fiery Mars among the stars
Grew pale and paler when,
At the Morn, came Venus ushering in
The Heroes of the Pen.

Not with sword and flame these Heroes came
To ravage and to slay,
But the savage soul with thought to tame,
And with love and reason sway;
Nor good steel wrought that battles fought
In the centuries of yore,
Was ever so bright as they burnished thought,
To cut into error's core;
And in the fight for truth and right,
Not a hundred thousand men
Of the heroes old were match for one
Of the Heroes of the Pen.

For the weapon they wield, nor armor nor shield
Endures for a single dint,
Nor glave withstands, nor bayonet steeled,
Nor powder, and ball, and flint:
It touches the thing called Slave or King,
And the Man doth reappear,
As did from the toad the Seraph spring
At the touch of Ithuriel's spear;

And wherever down it strikes a crown,
Says sovereign to serf, Amen!
Amen! and hurra, the people cry,
For the Heroes of the Pen!

Upon old tomes, those catacombs
Of the dead and buried time,
They lay the base of glory's domes,
And build with truth sublime;
And from their hight directing the fight
Of the right against the wrong,
They fill the world with the lettered might
Of eloquence and song.
Nor buried they lie with those who die
At threescore years and ten,
But atop the piles they have builded, sleep
The Heroes of the Pen.

Hurra for the true! of old or new,
Who heroes lived or fell—

Thermopylae's immortal few!
Hurra for the Switzer Tell!
Upvoice to sky the brave Gracchi!
Hurra for the Pole and the Hun!
For the men who made the Great July!
Hurra for WASHINGTON!
Yet old Time Past would triumph at last—
But hurra, and hurra again,
For the Heroes who triumph over Time!
The Heroes of the Pen.

THRENODY FOR FLORA.

WRITTEN FOR HER PARENTS.

Out of the cluster of our love,
A star has vanished up the sky;
Out of our nest, a spirit dove
Has flown angelically high.

A gap is in our fireside ring
The wideness of a little tomb;
A prattle such as robins sing,
Has faded out of every room.

Our hearts long for her pretty charms
Of babish questions manifold,
And for the little hugging arms
Now locked across her bosom cold.

Her bright hair, and her eyes that beamed
So bonnily, oh, how we miss!
And, oh, her loving lips! that seemed
Fashioned so purposely to kiss.

As fond hearts that in exile be,
Grow homesick for the ones they love,
So we grow heavensick to see
Our pet seraphical above.

6

Pet of the angels! in that home,
Faith sees her face serenely fair;
For, as she entered heaven's dome,
She left a window open there.

ON! RIGHT ON!

On! right on! Art thou immortal,
Born to act, and deeds to do,
And yet sittest in the portal
Of thy destiny? Pass through!

On! right on! strike—stave to slivers
Error's gates that bar thy way;
Enter, and live with the livers!
Live and act, while yet 'tis day.

On! right on! for night is coming—
Night of life, which comes to all—
When Death's fingers, chill and numbing,
Seal the lids and spread the pall.

On! right on! Life is a battle,
Where who wins must be a brave;
For erelong the clods shall rattle
On the coffin in the grave.

On! right on! His name is Legion,
That has resolution's arm ;
Victor he o'er many a region
Ere dull plodders take alarm.

On! right on! with high ambition,
Make that viper, Slander, feel
Writhings of submiss contrition,
With his head beneath thy heel.

On! right on! Think not life ending
When thou liest down to die:
On! right on! brave soul, ascending,
Soar forever in the sky !

THE EDEN OF WISHES.

It is at the foot of a mountain
Whose high brow is bared before God,
There gushes a crystalline fountain,
And makes a bright brook in the sod.

And the sod spreads away o'er a valley
That opens where blue waters be ;
And the brook with meandering dally
Goes babbling along to the sea.

There snowy sails pass, like the lazy
White clouds of a summery sky—
Appear and evanish where hazy
Infinity fences the eye.

Here falls over Pan's mossy pillows
The green gloom of tropical groves,
And Poesy hears the low billows
In airs that come up from the coves.

And here, while the sands of light sunny
Sift down through the leaves from above,
The wild bee gads hunting for honey,
With wings wove of whispers of love.

Here the ripples make music more mellow,
More sweet than the stops of a flute ;
Here the dark sky of leaves is starred yellow
With thick constellations of fruit.

This valley so pleasantly lonely,
Wherethrough doth the waterbrook run,
Holds one little cottage, one only,
And one little maid, only one.

Her blue eyes are clear pools of passion,
Her lips have the tremor of leaves,

And the speech that her lovely thoughts fashion,
Is sweeter than poetry weaves.

Flirtation, gross, flippant, and cruel,
Ne'er handled the hues on the wings
Of her love; in her heart is a jewel
No cunning of flattery strings.

For dwells all alone here the maiden,
And waits for a true lover's kiss:
Who would sigh for angelical Aiden,
With her in an Eden like this?

'Tis the Eden of Wishes, unreal,
This valley by sea bordered blue,
And the maiden is all an ideal—
I was but romancing to you.

CAROLINE.

Her eyes were blue and softly bright,
As morningglories wet with dew;
Her hair was like a cloud of night,
That streams of moonlight struggle through.

Her cheeks were of the hue of shells
That ope their bosoms in the sea;
Her voice, the chime of silver bells,
Forever ringing out a glee.

Her mien was modest as the droop
Of meadow lilies o'er a stream:
Her light step, graceful as their stoop
When soft winds wake them from a dream.

A truth was in her earnest glance,
On which the heart would aye rely;
Her every sigh inspired a trance,
As 'twere a whisper from the sky.

She was the dove of spirit birds—
The queen that wore the coronet
Of young love's reign—in sober words,
She was a beautiful coquette.

MABELLE.

WE walked where the grass was checkered
With the light through the leaves of May,
While the night, in her white shroud of moonshine,
Seemed the beautiful ghost of day.

The presence that made it a rapture
To walk in that bowery shade,
Was a fond being, meek in her beauty,
Half seraph and half loving maid.

Her voice had the sorrowful cadence
Of winds in a thicket of pine,
While her eyes, like the leaf-filtered moonlight,
Streamed through their long lashes to mine.

We had come to the end of the rainbow,
That had ever eluded till then,
And our hearts, which had always prayed double,
Now were beating the blessed amen.

Laved our souls in love's river Lethean
Till the moon in the west grew white,
And along the dim shore of morning
Broke the first purple billows of light.

When that red sea of dawn had swoln over
The beaconing morning star,
Of our vessels of life one was shipwreck
On the coast of God's heaven afar.

The vail between her and the angels
Was rent by our parting that dawn ;
And returning some summer moons after,
How I mourned for my beautiful gone !

Oh ! the love that first rendeth the heartstrings,
Is the love that continueth well ;
And though I lived mortal through ages,
All my life were a sigh for Mabelle.

IMMORTAL GLORY.

How **MANY** of the bright names now that gleam
In glory's heaven, skyed magnific spheres,
Shall cast their brilliant shadows in the stream
Of memory ten hundred thousand years ?

Who knows but we are in the night, and yet
There is a universal sun to rise,
When all these twinkling stars of fame shall set,
Or fade into the nothing of the skies ?

Mankind may climb the pyramid of soul,
Up by the stairflight of the centuries,
So high that he can hear the anthems roll
Of seraphim, and see where heaven is.

And then the loud huzzas of these low times,
That send up great names, may not strike their ears,
Enraptured with the fugues of upper climes,
And with the rolling music of the spheres.

The highest peaks of glory now that rise
May yet be whelmed rocks in that spirit sea
On whose calm tide, upfloating toward the skies,
The ark of raised humanity shall be.

Hope not to live immortal in a sound
That Admiration tongues and pens today:
Ere roll the million future ages round,
Where will the sound be? letters—where will they?

Nay, sounds must die, and letters that enshrine
Their corses, too, may utterly decay;
But thoughts, which are their quick ghosts, have divine
Existence, and shall never pass away.

No drop of thought once mingled with the sea
Of soul, shall perish, though it disappear:
The viewless vapor it shall form, may be
Part of a rainbow in some distant year.

Or, rising in its darkness, it may swell
Some thundercloud of passion yet to loom ;
For thought, of heaven born, or born of hell,
Doubles itself for aye in gleam or gloom.

Then, seek not glory ; it is utter naught—
More unsubstantial than a fairy's kiss ;
To be immortal, thou must think a thought !
Earth has no immortality but this.

EMMA STUART.

Oh! the voices of the crickets,
Chirping sad along the lea,
Are the very tears of music
Unto melancholy me;
And the katydids' responses
Up among the locust leaves,
Make my spirit very lonesome
On these pensive autumn eves.

For they mind me, Emma Stuart,
Of the bygone, blessed times,
When our heartbeats paired together
Like sweet syllables in rhymes;
Ere the faith of love was broken,
And our locked hands fell apart,
And the vanity of promise
Left a void in either heart.

Art thou happy, Emma Stuart?
I again may happy be
Nevermore: the autumn insects,
In the grass, and on the tree,
Crying as for very sorrow
At the coming of the frost,
Are to me love's fallen angels,
Wailing for their heaven lost.

Often, often, Emma Stuart,
On such solemn nights as this,
Have we sat and mused together
Of the perfectness of bliss—
Of the hope that lit the darkness
Of the future with its ray,
Which was like a star in heaven,
Beautiful, but far away!

By the gateway, where the locust
Of the moonlight made eclipse,
And the river ripple sounded
Like the murmur of sweet lips,

There a little maiden waited,
Telling all the moments o'er—
Emma Stuart! Emma Stuart!
Waits the maiden there no more?

No! ah, no! Along the pathway
Grows the high, untrampled grass,
Where the cricket stops to listen
For thy wonted feet to pass;
But thy footsteps, Emma Stuart,
Press no more the doorway stone,
Trip no more along the pathway—
And the cricket sings alone.

It is very mournful musing,
On such solemn nights as this,
How evanished all the promise
Of the perfectness of bliss:
Love's green grave between us, Emma,
Keeps us parted aye and aye—
Even not to know each other
In the Love Land far away!

TO MY WIFE.

OUR lives were two dark clouds of night,
That shadowed hope's clear stars above,
And fast were sinking out of sight;
When, meeting in the morning light,
They mingled there in blushing love.

Since then our life has been a day
Of summer birds and summer blooms:
Forenoon has wellnigh passed away,
But love's bright sun has lost no ray,
Undimmed by passion's thundering glooms.

Yet, be it storm or be it shine,
Nor shine nor storm ourself can sever;
For I am resolutely thine,
Thou art affectionately mine,
And thou and I are we forever. *one?*

And when the Mystery is passed—
Hereafter linked to Heretofore—
I saved through thee, we one at last
Shall be one spirit in the vast
Kingdom of Love forevermore.

THE END OF THE RAINBOW.

I wis of a region
Whose heavenly scope
Holds many a legion
Of angels of hope—
At the end of the rainbow.

Endure the dull present,
Its toil, moil, and sorrow!
We shall all find that pleasant
Elysium tomorrow—
At the end of the rainbow.

There the sky never varies
From glory to gloom;
There infinite prairies
Eternally bloom—
At the end of the rainbow.

The bees hive no honey
In that happy land;
For the days are all sunny,
The air always bland—
At the end of the rainbow.

There Love, by the mountains,
Climbs into the sky,
And Peace drinks at fountains
That never go dry—
At the end of the rainbow.

There pleasure's enjoyment,
In ardent career,
Never ends in the cloymont
That follows it here—
At the end of the rainbow.

His bright pinion sunk
At the goal of his mission,
There Hope slumbers, drunk
With the wine of fruition—
At the end of the rainbow.

No shadow Cimmerian
Of ignorance there;
But fountains Pierian
Jet into the air—
At the end of the rainbow.

There glitter the riches
That age never rusts;
There glory's proud niches
Are filled with our busts—
At the end of the rainbow.

Endure the dull present,
Its toil, moil, and sorrow!
We shall all find the pleasant
Elysium tomorrow—
At the end of the rainbow.

MISGIVING.

Oh! can it be that this is all of life,
Betwixt a cradle and a coffin? Death!
Canst thou put out this spark of God, the soul,
Amid the humid ashes of the grave?
This marvelous existency! this dream,
Bounded each side by night, is there no morn
To be, that we may then remember it,
And know it a reality?—The grave
And nothing! Doubt, the horrid goblin, haunts
The gloomy chambers of my brain, and wails:

“The grave and nothing! Love while yet the heart
Throbs warm; and when the eye whose thrilling glance
Beams in among the shadows of thy spirit,

MISGIVING.

Like sunshine in the forest, shall grow dull
And vacant, and the lip's red bloom grow pale,
Gaze then thy last, and kiss thy last; for love
Ends here forever! Rainbows hope may arch
In spans of beauty, that shall link thy years
One to an other gloriously, and tint
The clouds of sorrow; yet the last bright arch
Is broke by darkness; ay, it can not span
The gloomy valley of the shadow, death!
Take on the wings of thought, and soar away—
Away most infinitely nothingward!—
Away! till Earth gleam smaller than the eye
Of whom thou lovest—on! away! till thought
Grow crazy with infinity, alone
With the magnificent creation—on!
Where Fancy flaps her pennons full against
The battlement of Paradise, and soul
Deems to have traveled far enough to reach
The home of God: and yet eternity
Of matter, world, world, world, outstretches still
Beyond. No spirit greets thee in thy course;
Thou hearst no rustle of the wings of angels;
No whisper of intelligences here;
Naught here but matter, matter without end:

Thou art alone amid the silent wheels
Of the interminable mechanism."

Great God Almighty!—for THOU ART; else who
Did frame this endless, awful universe?—
Shall man, who loves, and hopes, and thinks, and feels,
And weeps, and shrieks for everlastingness,
Shall he end utterly here in the grave?
Hope no! in God's large mercy, no! While all
Unconscious, careless things, incapable
Of being nothing, must forever be,
Shall mind, the only thing that knows to be,
Be nothing? Seems not like a God, to cause
It so. We know not; all is mystery:
Life's awful problem—the solution, death!

EYES.

WHEN from the night where no dreams are,
Life's dawning rays begin,
Then woman's eye, the morning star,
Is there to tremble in.

The wings of Memory are set
With eyes of every hue
That eyes may be, from merry jet
To melancholy blue.

The first bright pair that clung my heart,
As magnet clings the steel,
Had each a flashing, wicked dart
Their black could not conceal.

The next, which lay upon my soul,
Like moonlight globes of dew,
Death's angel all their heaven stole,
To make the sky more blue.

The next were hazel: they were lit
At passion's hottest flame;
Whomever once their glory smit,
Forgot his very name.

The next were like the gray of sky,
Ere breaks the beamy light;
The flame of love, like dawn was nigh,
Though bosomed out of sight.

The next—song can not paint their hue;
Their orbs, which toward me roll—
Nor brown, nor gray, nor black, nor blue—
Are of the hue of soul!

When into night where mysteries are,
Life's lingering sunbeams fade,
Then woman's eye, the evening star,
Illumes the solemn shade.

MINNEHAHA.

Ere the Muses transatlantic,
Pale of face, and blue of eye,
Found the wilderness romantic
'Neath the occidental sky,
Think not then was here no worship
Of the beautiful and grand;
Think not Nature had no wooers
In the wild Hesperian land.

Poesy, agrestic maiden,
Wild-eyed, black-haired, haunted here,
Singing of the Indian Aiden,
Southwest of this mortal sphere;
Singing of the good Great Spirit,
Who is in and over all;

Singing sweetly every river,
Mountain, wood, and waterfall.

And this dark Parnassian maiden,
Sang sublimely war's wild art;
Sang of love and lips love-laden
With the honey of the heart.
But the warsong's frantic music,
And the deathsong's roundelay,
And the lovesong's rude cantata,
Westward, westward die away.

These will with the red tribes perish;
For their language leaves nor scroll
Nor tradition writ, to cherish
Such immortalness of soul.
So, the names that they have given
To the charms of Nature here—
Stream, cascade, lake, hill, and valley—
Let us fervently revere.

For, though civil life effaces
All else they have gloried in,
Yet this poetry of places
Will remind us they have been:

Therefore, white man, pioneering
Far and farther in the west,
Let the Indian names be sacred,
Though thou ravage all the rest.

Call not cataracted rapid
That has leaped its way and riven,
By his own name, curt and vapid,
That some Saxon boor has given!
But let Nature keep her titles!
Let her name the quick cascade
Minnehaha—Laughing Water—
In the language she has made!

Minnehaha! how it gushes
Like a flow of laughter out!
Minnehaha! how it rushes
Downward with a gleeful shout!
Minnehaha! to the echoes—
Minnehaha! back the same—
Minnehaha! Minnehaha!
Live forever that sweet name!

A SONG FOR THE CRATS.

THERE is hope on the banks of the Danube,
There is hope in the grand tintamar
Of cannon, and music, and clangor,
Where Sultan encounters with Czar;
There is hope where the sway of the Tartar
Is swept down the bloody Hoang;
There is hope for the Isles of the Morning
In Liberty's bugle twang:
Down, down with the Autocrat!
Hurra for the Democrat!
Is Liberty's bugle twang.

The blood that has flowed from old heroes,
And settled in Lord, Prince, or Don,
Shall find the true level of manhood,
As the current of Freedom rolls on;
For the world is aweary of nobles,
Who groan when the people rejoice,
Rejoice at the groans of the people,
And shudder at Liberty's voice:
Down, down with th' Aristocrat!
Hurra for the Democrat!
Is Liberty's righteous voice.

Yet it were but a change of oppressors,
To fly from the Blood to the Burse—
From th' Aristocrat's power of birthright,
To the Aurocrat's power of purse;
But all, they must all be down stricken!
The thunder is in the sky;
It waits but for Truth's invocation,
It waits but for Liberty's cry:
Down, down with the Aurocrat!
Hurra for the Democrat!
And this shall be Liberty's cry.

The Autocrat rushes to ruin,
Th' Aristocrat waxes old;
And thought, in Democracy's balance,
Shall weigh down the Aurocrat's gold.
From the turmoil of thick revolutions,
Mobocracy's chaos of wrong,
A fair world of order is forming,
That shall unto Freedom belong:
Down, down with the Mobocrat!
Hurra for the Democrat!
And the world shall to Freedom belong.

MAY, 1852.

LEGEND OF THE ALABAMA.

LET me tell thee, Love, a legend
Of a stream whose waters roll
Toward the Aiden of the Indian,
Southwest Country of the Soul.

It is said that in the language
Which the Manitou loved best,
Was the meaning of the sweet word
Alabama, HERE WE REST.

Well, along the Shenandoah,
Where the ripples run like rhyme,
Lived a tribe that spoke this language,
In the dimly distant time.

It was moons and moons unnumbered
Ere the Spanish Christian men
Had come sailing from the sunrise ;
And Wahleeyah reigned here then.

And Wahleeyah was a sachem
With a forehead like the dawn ;
Keen his dark eye as the eagle's,
Yet as mild as of the fawn.

He had never scalped a foeman,
Never widowed loving squaw ;
But his great soul was a glory,
And his gentle word was law.

He had talked with the Great Spirit,
On the far blue hills above,
Teaching thence his tribe, that better
Than to slay, it is to love.

So they smoked the sacred peacepipe,
Smoked with all the tribes around :
Long the tomahawk was buried,
In their happy hunting-ground.

Peaceful lived they as the spirits
Of the hunters in the sky;
Till one midnight, from the north land,
Came a clan with hideous cry.

Yells went up along the hillside,
Yells went clamoring through the vale;
All the wilderness was horror
With the wild whoop and the wail.

Piling up between the fierce foe
And his kindred, heaps of dead,
Reeked the right hand of Wahleeyah
First that night with slaughter red.

Brave he fought for love and freedom,
Till, at rise of morning star,
On the free hills were his loved ones,
From their fathers' graves afar.

Where the golden threads of sunlight
Were inwoven through the leaves,
Of the harvest hot of battle
Lay the reaped, ungathered sheaves.

But Wahleeyah, on that morning,
With the rescued of his band,
Sought the sweet Southwest, aspiring
There to find the Spirit Land.

For his soul was sick of bloodshed,
And he hoped to find a rest
From the warwhoop and the deathyell,
In the green groves of the blest.

Many a time they fixed their wigwams,
Fondly deeming they had found
That hoped happy land of spirits,
The celestial hunting-ground.

But some clan would come, and drive them
From their pleasant place away;
When again they journeyed onward,
Wellnigh weary of the day.

When the last, consumptive blushes
Glowed upon the summer's cheek,
Came they where the grand magnolia
Skyward reared its snowy peak.

Spicy airs among the cypress
Whispered soft, mysterious words,
And as ghosts of earthly sorrows
Seemed the beautiful, bright birds.

All along the hazy valley
Lay the formless sprite of dreams,
And the golden ghost of sunlight
Flashed upon the spirit streams.

They had found it! they had found it!
Found the Country of the Soul!
Reached the river whose clear waters
Through that forest heaven roll!

Rushed they to this limpid river,
Fancied river of the blest,
And the chieftain cried, in transport,
Alabama!—HERE WE REST.

So this river, from the language
Which the Manitou loved best,
Took the name of Alabama—
Alabama, HERE WE REST.

WRESTLING.

In sooth, it is not worth to live,
This petty round of mine!
My soul is frantically drunk
With strong Ambition's wine,
Yet ever and forever sunk
In Need's low, snaky twine.

Anon it wrenches off the coils
With a most maniac might,
And leaps up toward the stars that shine
In life's mysterious night—
To fall back in a tighter twine,
And in a fiercer fight!

WRESTLING.

Give way! give way! I must go up!
'Tis death to linger here!
My strangling spirit must have air!
 Air of an other sphere!—
Ah! Hope is dead, young Hope the fair,
 And I chained to her bier.

I am as in a gloomy vale;
 I see the summits dim
Of Glory's mountains, like the dreams
 That Mab's fine fingers limn;
But I am islanded by streams
 Too cold and wide to swim!

REMINISCENCES.

I FEEL the clear brook of boyhood
Flow into my soul tonight,
And Memory flashes her pinions,
Like a bird, in the waters bright.

I stand by the lake Keeuka,
Where we ran from school to swim;—
Hah! there is the blind old fisher!
Right well I remember him.

All day, with his skiff at anchor
Far out on the limpid blue,
He trolled for the beautiful salmon,
Till he felt the fall of the dew.

Then the lake-blue eyes of Minnie
Would watch till he rowed ashore:
Oh! the wonderful eyes of his Minnie
The fisher might see no more.

In the green witch-hazel bushes
We lurked till the school let out,
Then joined with the whooping children,
And boldly ran home with a shout.

How we pillaged the nest of the blackbird,
Where the flaggy forest grew!
And pilfered the eggs of the robin,
So round and so temptingly blue!

In the balmy eves of the summer,
When the air floated full of the moon,
We played on the green of the common,
Till the night rounded up to the noon.

And nights when the white snow of winter
Like a frozen moonlight lay,
Down the slippery steep of the hillside
We skimmed on the dizzy sleigh.

The brother who mated my spirit
In the rush of its morning flow,
Grew up with me into manhood—
But now he lies under the snow!

Oh! the winds of night are crying,
Like women when they weep!
Let me fly away from my sorrow,
And be a glad boy in my sleep!

THE LAND REDEEMED.

Not always shall this sacred earth
Be at the nabob's nod ;
The land shall be redeemed at last,
And rendered back to God :
Then each shall of the acres hold
Enough to make him free ;
None shall usurp more than his need,
And none shall landless be.

The system of old feudal wrong,
That makes the people pay
For room to live upon the earth,
Fades even now away:
Ere long the landlord shall become
A laughter and a scoff,
As swells the tide of human rights
To sweep his landmarks off.

For man perceives the truth at last—
Long faded in the dim—
That record, scroll, nor parchment writ
Can take the earth from him;
That Nature makes a title deed
To each one for his time
In his own want, and who takes more,
He perpetrates a crime.

This simple truth shall turn the cheek
Of pale Starvation red,
As over old ancestral parks
The pauper's sheaves are spread;

This truth shall put the gewgaws all
Of kingcraft under ban,
And man shall meet his fellow on
The common platform, **MAN**.

Then prince and peasant, side by side,
Shall gladsome toilers be,
And grades go down the flood of right,
As dead wood to the sea ;
For when each has his human right
Of home upon the soil,
All shall be Princes of the Soul,
Ennobled by their toil.

Philosophy shall then sublime
Each heart to pure desire,
Beginning with the little child
Beside the winter fire ;
Religion true shall hover round
On starry summer eves,
And Song transport the happy homes,
Rural among the leaves.

Glad time of earth's beatitude!
When none shall hoard or steal,
But all mankind together work
For universal weal—
The warlike and the evil yield
To peaceful and to good,
And nations all take hold of hands
In loving sisterhood.

LITTLE FANNY.

Of home's boyish blisses
Heart-echoed for aye,
Were prattles and kisses
That Death stole away.

Oh! Death has no pity!
He took, while he smiled,
Took Fanny, the pretty,
The fond little child.

From mother-love duty,
From father-love pride,
He lured the young beauty,
To make her his bride.

Her hair was a cluster
Of glooms and of gleams,
And her eyes had the luster
That stars have in dreams.

The busiest rover
That buzzes and sips,
Never found honeyed clover
Like Fanny's red lips.

Her cheeks were ripe peaches,
Her voice was a bird's,
Making sweet little speeches
Without any words.

And she was love's very
Ideal of love ;
Not moody, not merry,
But mild, like a dove.

So near the sweet lisper
To heaven did keep,
That angels could whisper
To her in her sleep.

Too near! for her smiling
In dreams as she lay,
Showed they were beguiling
Her spirit away.

And once, as the peaches
Grew flush with the sun,
The heavenward reaches
Of her life were done.

Above the stars' glister,
Above the sky blue,
With our little sister
The death-angel flew.

Oh! then tears of sadness
From fond ones were wrung!
O! then songs of gladness
By seraphs were sung!

Oh! then home was lonely!
For at the hearth, where
She had chirruped, now only
The cricket chirped there.

All life's other blisses
Can never repay
Those prattles and kisses
Which Death stole away.

TO ELIZA LOGAN.

THOU art the Vestal of the sacred fire
Which, flaming on the altar of the soul,
While truth and virtue live, shall ne'er expire;
And ever in the sacerdotal stole
Of awful purity, thou movest through
The inner temple of emotions pure,
And, like a Sibyl, so expressest true
The spirit's mysteries, that we are sure
Thou hast drank inspiration at the fount
Castalian of the genius-Helicon.
Nymph histrionic of Parnassus mount!
Apollo twined a wreath of thought upon

Thy sad, imploring brow, and sent thee down
To live his glory forth; and, like a song
Of love, sung with the gush of tears, to drown
The soul in passion's sea, thy pathos strong
Along the heartchords sweeps, and wakes a tone
Whose echoes haunt us in the after days,
Like memories of that love whose spell has thrown,
In youth, around the life its mellow rays.

Who sees, must love thee; for thine earnest eyes
Two gushing sighs expressed to vision, seem;
Thy brows, Aonian eagles in the skies;—
Bright Incarnation of our raptest dream
Of Poesy and Passion! all that hear
Thy sweet-tongued inspiration—Sapphic tones
Which voice the heartthrobs—give to thee the tear,
As night gives dew when breeze-stirred blossom moans.
Thou art a living poem, learned by heart
For worth of sentiment and wealth of rhyme;
And—like it, though forgotten be its art—
Thou hast swept chords to vibrate for all time.

THE SPIRIT'S RESPONSE.

BRIGHT Spirit supernal,
Oh ! say, canst thou know,
In thy home eternal,
The sad mortal's wo ?
Canst visit, fraternal,
Thy brother below ?

Not a thought, not an emotion,
Not a tear, and not a sigh
Stirs the boundless sea of spirit,
But it ripples to the sky ;
And the gurgling of those ripples
On the empyrean strand,
Is a telephonic language,
Which we angels understand.

Fleeter than the wings of fancy,
Silent as the steps of night,
We, the viewless souls of heaven,
Fly the maze of planets bright;
Visit Earth and flashing Venus,
Visit Jupiter and Mars,
Visit all the grand creations,
All the universe of stars.

Most we visit mortal kindred—
Those who think of us with death,
With the flutter of the pulses,
And the rattle of the breath—
And impalpable to senses
Of the dwellers on the spheres,
With their souls we hold communion,
Sitting by the fount of tears.

In the rain of weeping sorrow
We with mortals love to stay;
For we know that every teardrop
Washes some dark sin away;

And we know, too, that hope's rainbow
Comes and sits upon the cloud,
And that heaven looks the brighter
After grief-storm wild and loud.

Brother, never thou awakest
From a dream of me to weep,
Never, shutting eyelids tearful,
Sinkest to a sighing sleep,
But our little seraph sister,
With her wings and waving hair,
And her bright-eyed cherub brother,
And myself, are with thee there.

Thou art sadder, but art better,
Since death parted thee and me;
For, in stead of two to watch thee,
Now, my brother, thou hast three:
Every thought of us, that raises
In thy heart the tearful leaven,
Charms a triad of blest angels—
Thou art so much nearer heaven!

LOVE.

From the cradled lull by the hearthstone,
To the coffined lull in the clod,
O! is it for man to be happy
Hither side of the City of God?

Though gold has the glittering promise,
And we seek it far and near,
Not gold from the streets of Heaven
Could pave a paradise here.

And fame, that to young ambition
Has a voice of thundering roll,
Sends a bolt with its flash of glory—
Where it strikes, it blasts the soul.

All the joys of this dark existence
Keep fading, one by one,
Before the approaching death-dawn,
As the stars before the sun.

O! is there for man no pleasure
That will bloom forever here,
And, transplanted to Eden, flourish
In that celestial sphere?

Yes, love! that gives to the spirit
Wings fluttering to aspire;
Love, that makes our human heartstrings
The chords of an angel's lyre.

Yes, love! that skies the summer bluer,
And paints the leaves more green;
That knows what the wild bees whisper,
And feels what the bird-songs mean.

Yes, love! that weaves wings of the blossoms,
To winnow the fragrant air;
That wraps in a white-cloud mantle,
And climbs the cerulean stair.

Love is always, always climbing;
It belongs in heaven above:
O! our souls are linked to the angels
In every kiss of love!

SCOTTISH SONG.

TO TOM STANTON.

HERE's a han' wi' you, my crony;
Here's a heart wi' you for aye;
O' guid friends the best of ony
Hae ye been for mony a day.

When misfortune's frost sae chilly
Withered youthfu' hopes in bloom,
Of a' men, ye was the billy
Gied the luckless bardie room.

Ye it was that spak' me kindly,
Ye that flung the han' to me,
When the warl folk leered half blindly,
Squinting wi' wealth's dazzled e'e.

Mony a time syne then thegither
Hae we spent in social glee,
Till our hearts hae grown to ither,
An' na moe can severed be.

When the moon hae blinked at gloamin',
An' the sheen stars glinted bright,
Arm in arm linked, tentless roamin',
Oft in crack we've whiled the night.

All along back memory's vista
Through life's wilderness, the trees
Stir their leaves an' blossoms, kist a'
By thy friendship's genial breeze.

Here's a han' wi' you, my crony,
Here's a heart wi' you for aye;
O' guid friends the best of ony
Hae ye been for mony a day.

TO OTWAY CURRY.

Sirs in the dell the sad Muse sobbing—
Fond sweetheart of those ardent days
When thy young bosom thrilled athrobbing
With her divinely whispered lays.

Lovelorn she sits and brokenhearted ;
For thou, who whileome wooed her, now
Hast left her pining passion-thwarted
Beneath the mournful willow bough.

There hangs thy harp, whereon she gazes,
As listening to thy luscious chimes :
Its cunning chords the weird wind grazes,
And faints away in rapturous rhymes.

Yet these flow not with thy flush spirit—
She dreams them thine, not long, not long;
The wind plays on—she does not hear it—
Her heart aches for thy zeal of song.

Her pining heart aches—false one! ask her
Forgiveness for that heart betrayed;
O! be no more this moody masker
Of soul amid life's cold parade.

The Muse's heart aches for thy passion,
The flame with which thy youth did woo;
Turn to the pensive Maid Parnassian,
And love her as thou wont to do.

Wed her, and sing us the spousals,
Sing us the songs of thy soul!
Poesy's maudlin carousals
Quell by thy sober control!

Once while the year is semental,
Cuckoos come fluting their lay:
Cuckoo of Song Occidental,
Charm us even often as they!

ON AN INDIAN'S GRAVE.

THE sunset blushes of the occident
Glow faint and fainter, and as Twilight waves
Her wizard wand athwart the firmament,
The quick stars spring from their cerulean graves
In pale shrouds, doubled in yon brook that laves,
With Prattling lapse, the foot of this old mound,
Where sleep, perchance, a thousand Indian braves—
Their monuments these ancient trees around,
Whose leafy meshes sift the moonbeams on the ground.

This grave, from which the white man has exhumed
Some bones of mortal buried long ago,
Mayhap was scooped here ere had Science plumed
His starry wings to pass old ocean's flow.
But whose the skeleton, no one may know
Again on earth ; for now remains there naught
Of deed recorded or of name to show
That such a one e'er in life's battle fought,
Or groveled infamous, or deathless honors sought.

Conjecture, threading through the darkling path
Of dead years, may behold him walk the chief
Of savage warriors, in his wild-eyed wrath
Wielding the tomahawk with vengeance brief,
Or eking out his tortured prisoner's grief,
While round the death-fire dance his frenzied rout
Of tattooed clansmen, shivering every leaf
Of these old trees with their demoniac shout
Of horrid glee to see the victim's life go out.

A hissing flame-tongue from the nether hell
Is this revenge, which, licking up the tears
Of pity at the fount from which they well,
All love's flush from the spring of passion sears,
And through the tender heartstrings shriveling veers:
The direst fury in the human breast,
It flourishes through all the savage years,
Fatting on ignorance; yet oft is dressed,
Among the civilized, in Glory's martial vest.

But Fancy limns him not in scenes alone
Of barbarous vengeance;—round the council fire
The sagamores are gathered; in the tone
Which Nature's savage passions aye inspire,
Stern, iron words he utters, which acquire
Strange force of meaning from his gestures strong,
As thunders from the leap of lightnings dire:
Beneath yon tree, whence that cicada's song
Comes hoarsely, haply he harangued the gloomy throng.

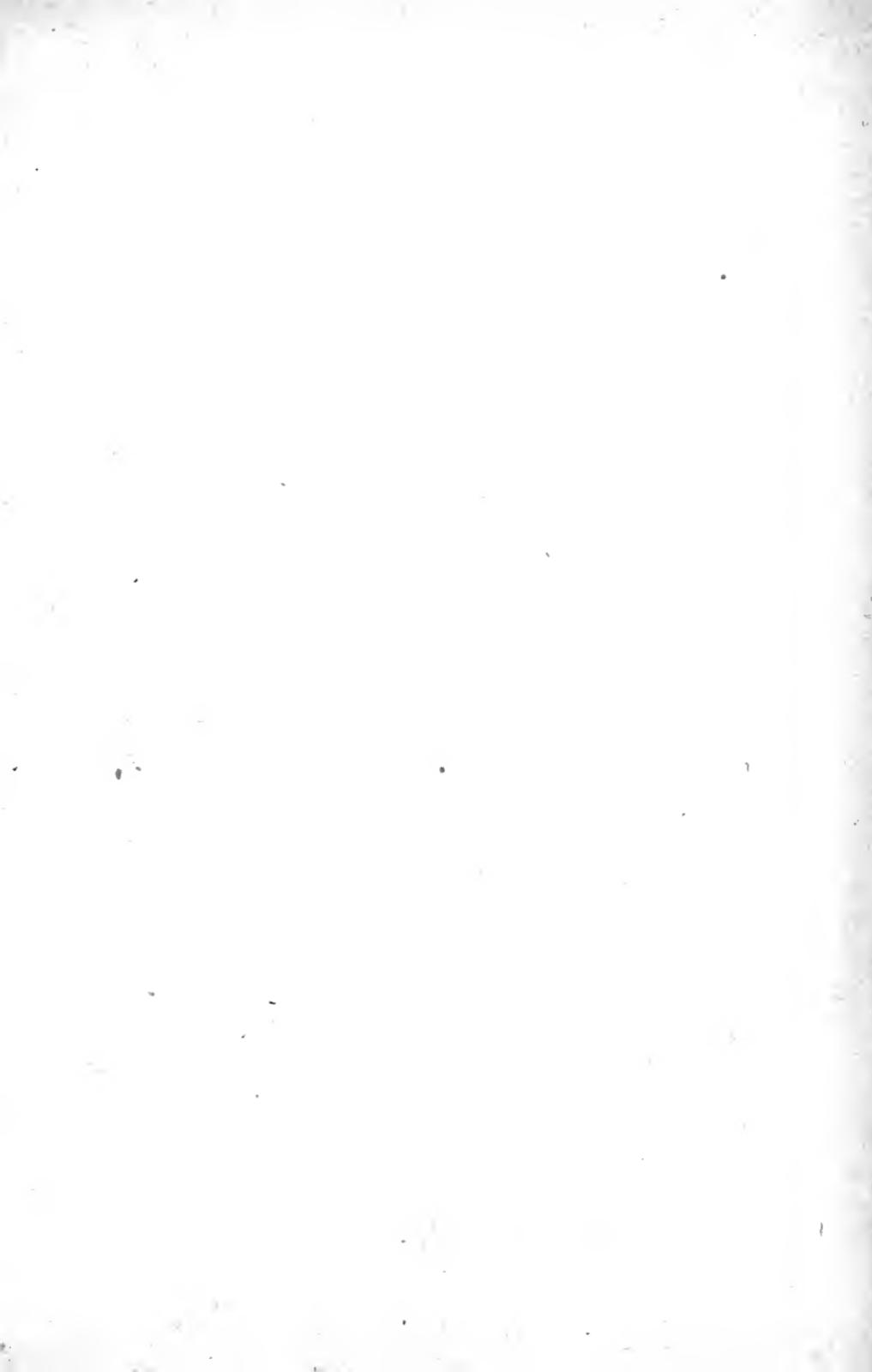
Strange are the changes, chieftain, (if such thou,)
That time has wrought here since then; strange the scene
Would meet thy vision, were it quickened now:
 Where yonder cornfields wave their streamers green,
 Which rustle softly in the breath of e'en,
Tall forest trees locked arms above thee; where
 That closure limits, crooked as the mean
System that made it, earth spread free as air,
And thou and thy red hunters chased the wild deer there.

Then, too, rude wigwams squatted here and there
 In leafy twilight, and the forest maid,
Of black bewildering eye and streaming hair,
 Poured her wild lovesong in the viny shade,
 While at her feet the checkered moonshine played:
Now yonder cluster thick the village homes
 Of men enlightened, and there in the glade
Stand villas, whence the blue-eyed maiden comes,
 And with her pale-faced lover here at evening roams.

Like as the red cloud-glories of the dawn,
That flaunt the orient before the sun,
In his uprising are consumed and gone,
So faded these wild races, one by one,
In civilization's morn, till now are none
Even to guard the graves left here; the hand
Of Christian white man ruthlessly has done
Away their sacredness; and now we stand,
And muse of human bones uncovered in the sand.

O what a wonder is this human life!
O what a wonder man! He lives his time,
His little hour, in passion's, glory's strife;—
The grave ingulfs him;—from some other clime
Bards come and spin the melancholy rhyme
Over his noteless bones. Such is the lot,
Alas! of all: however loud the chime
Of funeral bells when we lie down to rot,
Our graves are leveled soon, and we on earth forgot.













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